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With the author's (comp.)

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE RECENT
PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

AT
DAMASCUS :
WITH REFLECTIONS THEREON ;

AND
An Appendix,

CONTAINING VARIOUS DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE SUBJECT.

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BY  
DAVID SALOMONS, Esq.

LONDON :  
LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMANS,  
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1840.



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AN ACCOUNT

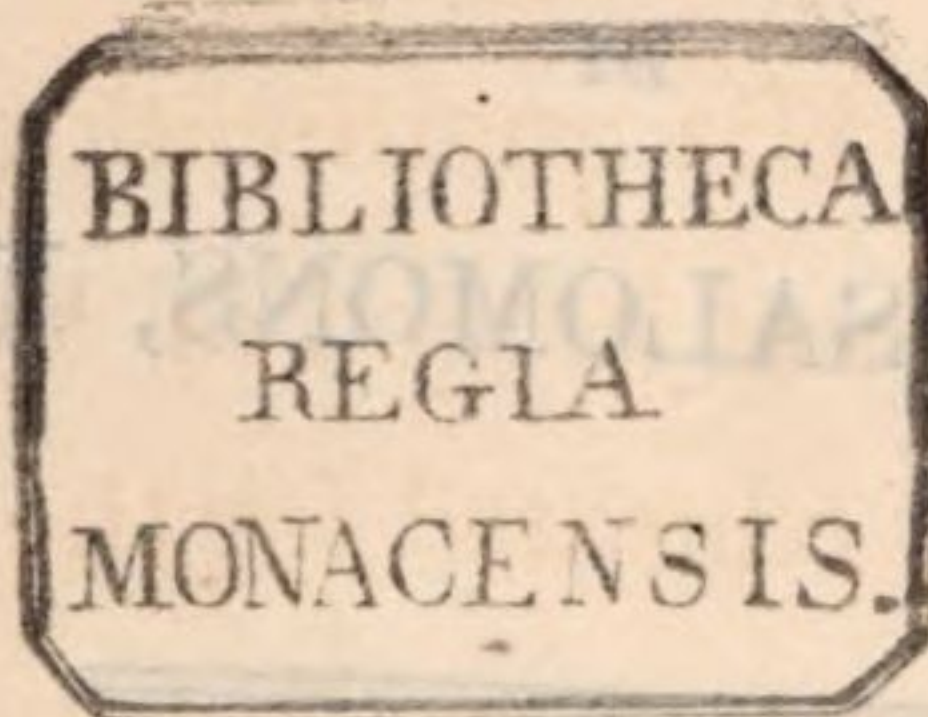
OF THE REGENT

PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

DAMASCUS:

WITH REFLECTIONS THEREON:

WILSON AND OGILVY,  
57, Skinner Street, Snowhill,  
LONDON.



1840

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## PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS.

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THE object of the following pages is to bring under the notice of the public a more precise and connected statement than has yet appeared of the sufferings of the Jews at Damascus, arising out of the abominable charge made against them—of using human blood as an ingredient in the food compounded for the Passover festival. The narration of the events at Damascus is by the Rev. Mr. PIERITZ, who collected the facts on the spot. His qualification for the task he undertook may be best judged of by stating that he was born a Jew, and educated for the profession of a Rabbi. He is, therefore, well acquainted with Hebrew literature, the duties of the Jewish clergy, and the laws enjoined for the religious conduct of the members of the Jewish community. Having renounced the religion of his fathers, he was engaged in Missionary labours for the purpose of promoting



Christianity amongst the Syrian Jews, and was attached to the mission established in the Holy City of Jerusalem. He could have no motive to palliate any crime, nor desire to conceal abominations which ought to be exposed to public view. With an extensive knowledge of the Jewish writers, in addition to his acquaintance with the Scriptures, he was particularly fitted for the duty imposed upon him. When the miserable fables of the dark ages are revived, even in an obscure quarter of the world, society is indebted to the man, or body of men, that boldly and fearlessly venture forth, determined to brave every obstacle to the investigation of truth; and the writer cannot better conclude this brief introduction, than by recording his grateful thanks for the service Mr. PIERITZ has performed, not alone to the Jews, but to the cause of humanity throughout the world.

LONDON, JULY 28th, 1840.



## REFLECTIONS,

&c.

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DAMASCUS, the scene of the late enormities against the Jews, is an important town of Syria, carrying on a very considerable trade. It is the principal city of the Pachalick of Damascus, is of great antiquity, and mentioned in Scripture as the scene of many interesting events. The population is variously stated, but is believed to be about 120,000 souls, chiefly Mussulmans, but comprising many Christians, and a number of Jews. The Christian denominations include Catholics, Greeks, and Armenians. The Jews are numerous, although their number is not accurately known: amongst them are many persons of opulence, who carry on a considerable trade, and the Farchi and Arari families, who have been sufferers in the late persecution, are of great reputation, and considered the leading members of that community. Until very lately, Damascus belonged to Turkey; but the victorious career of Ibrahim Pacha won the important province of Syria



from the government of the Sultan, and transferred this city to the care of Mahomet Ali, and it forms a part of that territory which at the present moment is a subject of negociation between Turkey, Egypt, and the great European Powers. It is one of the Holy Cities of the East, and its population long enjoyed the reputation of being of the most fanatic character. Until very recently no European could appear in the streets of Damascus in a Frank dress; but this prejudice has subsided, and Europeans may now consult their own wishes and convenience as to the costume most congenial to their tastes.

It should here be observed that monastic establishments are very common throughout Syria and the Holy Land. Indeed, every portion of that renowned district, consecrated by the most interesting recollections of sacred and profane history, possesses convents of monks belonging to the Latin or Greek denominations. These establishments are often built on the highest eminences; rather resembling fortifications than religious houses. Around Damascus are several convents, and Padre Thomaso, whose name has lately become so common in connexion with the cruelties practised against the Jews, was a Catholic friar of the Capuchin order, an inhabitant of the Latin convent in that city. The Catholic convents are under the protection of France, and Consuls representing the chief European states reside at Damascus. It appears that Padre Thomaso having left his convent in company with his servant, and not returning according to his usual habit, information



was given to M. Ratti Menton, the Consul of France, who instituted an inquiry for the purpose of discovering what had become of them. A report that the monk was last seen in the Jewish quarter was sufficient to cause suspicion that the Jews had murdered the friar and his servant. A poor Israelite barber was fixed on as the first victim; and many of the most wealthy merchants of Damascus were afterwards apprehended on the same charge. The hapless barber was subjected to the most cruel treatment, in the hope of eliciting information that might lead to the apprehension of the supposed murderers. A succession of tortures were inflicted upon him without avail. Prevaricating replies were, for a length of time, given to the insidious questions suggested to him. Human nature at length gave way under the brutal treatment he experienced, and the barber agreed to a confession, that he, with the most respectable and wealthy Jews of Damascus, had engaged in the deliberate murder of the monk and his servant, the object of the murder being to obtain Christian blood for the celebration of the Passover. On this infamous charge, extracted from the agonized replies of those who were the victims of the direst cruelty, numbers of men, women, and children, were imprisoned, and many were tortured till they died, asseverating their innocence of the horrid crime imputed to them. Such is the outline of this horrible outrage, invented by malice and supported by prejudice, and maintained by those whose conduct, though they adopt the name of Christians, savours more of the fierce passions of the illiterate and uncultivated savage.



The Narrative of Mr. Pieritz will now be presented *entire*, as communicated to the Jews of Alexandria after his return from Damascus.

This mode of stating the facts has been preferred, as relieving the writer from the charge that might be brought against him—of having either wilfully coloured or distorted occurrences which so deeply implicate the judgment, and perhaps the character, of all engaged in them.

The reader's attention is solicited to the details of the painful scenes described by Mr. Pieritz. The remarks which have suggested themselves on the contemplation of these dreadful outrages will be subsequently introduced.



NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
CRUEL TREATMENT OF THE DAMASCUS  
JEWS.

BY THE REV. G. M. PIERITZ.

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PADRE THOMASO was a Monk of the Capuchin Order, a native of Sardinia. He had lived in Damascus since the year 1807, where he occasionally practised medicine. He was particularly accustomed to vaccinate children, both of the Jews and others, by which he amassed a tolerable sum of money. On account of his usefulness, he was much regarded by the Jews of Damascus. He also had a servant, Ibrahim, a native Christian, but who was not generally known to the Jews, nor is it ascertained that they knew he had a servant at all. On the 5th of February last he left his Convent, but did not return at night, nor has he made his appearance since. The following day his cell was examined by the French Consul, when every thing was found in proper order, and, amongst other things, a sum of money, now said to have been 10,000 piastres; though another report, more to be credited, states that 150,000 piastres were found, and that



the remaining 140,000 piastres have been made away with. The servant, I should mention, was also missing.

Feb. 7th (being Friday), notice was given to His Excellency Sherriff Pasha, who immediately instituted an inquiry on the demand of the French Consul, since all the Latin Priests enjoy here French protection. The inquiry instituted is represented to have been of a double character:—

First: Where Padre Thomaso was seen last.

Secondly: There were certain self-sufficient Sheikhs (persons professing the Mahommedan religion, but pretending to the power of divination) called in, to throw some light on the disappeared, by their preternatural knowledge.

It is asserted that these latter declared that Padre Thomaso and his servant were murdered by the Jews in their own quarter; and this speculation was confirmed, by the fact that Thomaso actually was in the Jewish quarter on the day of his disappearance, at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. He was then seen, at the door of a Jewish barber's shop, sticking up a notice of an auction, that was some time after to take place. I heard some persons say that he was seen in the Jewish quarter a second time—about three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day; whether this statement be true or false does not appear, neither is it very material. It was now, however, taken for granted that the Jews murdered Padre Thomaso and



his servant, in order to secure their blood for the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was near at hand.

Farach Kataserd, an elderly Jew living in the Christian street, then came forward, and testified that he saw Thomaso so late as five o'clock in the evening of Feb. 5, in his (Christian) street. For this he was put in prison.

Feb. 8th (Saturday).—An individual of the Moslem faith, but of notoriously bad character, called Mahommed Telli, who had been for some time in prison for debt, having heard what was going on, said he knew all the bad characters amongst the Jews, and if he were at liberty he would soon discover the murderers. It is stated that the French Consul, hearing this, immediately procured this man's liberation: it is said by paying his debt for him. At the suggestions of this fellow, who became afterwards so useful in the service of the French Consulate, as well as of other like characters, who, whether voluntarily or paid, acted as spies from the commencement, joined to the allegations of the above-mentioned Sheikhs, many arrests were made, all amongst the Jews, from Friday night until Sunday; some by the French Consul in person, others by his or his underlings' order. It is difficult to describe the consternation of the Jews at these proceedings. They were somewhat relieved by the glimmering hope that their innocence would soon be apparent. It was known, that a day or two before the disappearance of Padre Thomaso and his servant, a violent dispute had taken place between them and a certain Sheikh, El Mukan, leader of the Mule-



teers, of the name of Iba Trieb, in a much-frequented place, the Khan Astad Bastad, when, while the robust servant seized the man by the throat, and held him till the blood came, his master, Padre Thomaso, cursed him in his faith (he being a Mahomedan). This caused a great sensation amongst the bystanding Mahomedans, and peculiarly called forth some violent language from a respectable Mahomedan merchant of the name of Abu-yekych el Khaphar; while the muleteer swore that Father Thomaso shall not die but by his hands. This is a very material circumstance! And now it happened, that when the report circulated of the disappearance of the monk and his servant, the last-mentioned merchant also disappeared. At first the suspicion of the murder of this merchant was also thrown on the Jews; but the attention of the public being arrested by the shop of the merchant being and remaining closed, the door was forced open, and the man was found dead, hanging in his shop, the door being carefully secured from within. The Jews at that time expected, as other reasonable men would, that an investigation would take place, and that it might then appear that the merchant, in consequence of the dispute mentioned, was the murderer, either by himself, or together with the ill-used enraged Muleteer, or others; and that he destroyed himself to escape torture and disgrace. But, alas! no investigation took place; the Muleteer not even examined, on whom the suspicion rests so heavily, even independently of the merchant! Only amongst the Jews, investigations, searches, and imprisonment, were incessantly carried on. Several dead persons in the Jewish burying-



ground, lately buried, were disinterred, to see whether the missing individuals might not be amongst them, or who might have died from injuries received in the attempt to murder the monk or his servant. It must be observed, and for the future borne in mind, that the monk himself, although sixty years old, was yet in full vigour, of a hot temperament, and tall stature; whilst his servant was notoriously robust, and of more than ordinary strength, as those who knew him can testify. But it will be seen that the poor Jews, who were at last fixed upon as being the murderers, had no marks of violence at all about them!

Feb. 9th (Sunday).—Saleun, the barber, was also arrested, like others, but, upon the entreaties of his wife, was the same day again set at liberty. This barber is a Jew, about twenty years old, married about half a year, and supported himself partly by his trade and partly by the alms occasionally given him by the more affluent Jews. He is a very ignorant person, and of a rather low character: he is the same before mentioned, to whose shop-door Father Thomaso had fixed the notice of the auction on the day of his disappearance. Some persons now came forward, and raised doubts whether the paper, which was yet up at his shop-door, was the same which the monk had put up; and they soon got witnesses to testify that the wafers with which it was now stuck up were not of the same colour as those of the first day.

Feb. 10th (Monday).—The unhappy barber is therefore arrested the second time, and confined for three days in the



house of the French Consulate, the notorious Mahommed Telli having free access to him. The same day Sherriff Pasha, governor of the city, sends for the chief Rabbies, Yacob Anthabi, and other subordinate Rabbies, Hhakham, Sh'lo-mah Arari, and Hhakham Khalphan Atia, and declares to them that if they do not discover the murderers within twenty-four hours they should all three be beheaded. He then dismisses them, and they retire to their homes. They immediately repair to the synagogues, assemble together the whole congregation, and in the most solemn manner blowing the horn, and other ceremonies, pronounce the severest excommunication against every Jew who should know any thing of the murder of the monk or his servant—no matter by whom committed—and not come forward to give his evidence. Upon this a young man, a Jew, Yetskhah Yarah, comes to the Rabbies, and declares, that on the 5th of February, following his trade as usual, selling tobacco, he saw Father Thomaso and his servant at a certain spot, about half an hour's walk from the Jewish quarter, on the road leading to Salakhina, about half an hour before sunset, and that he then and there had the following conversation with the servant of the monk:—He said to him, "You have not bought any tobacco of me for some time; buy some now;" but the servant answered him, "I am not in want of any, for I bought some to-day." This evidence is in perfect accordance with that of the first-mentioned Farach Katserd who is now in prison, these two statements confirming one another. Yetschakh Yarah was then taken to the French Consul, when he repeated what he had deposed



before the Rabbies, and the French Consul sent him for trial to Sherrieff Pasha. His Excellency gets enraged with the unhappy man, for presuming to give evidence in favour of the Jews. He inquires, "Who bribed you to give this false evidence?" The man affirms he speaks nothing but the truth: he is therefore laid down and flogged; and still insisting on the truth of his declaration, the flogging continues till he got upwards of 5000 (!!!) lashes in succession. He is carried away lifeless,—recovers for awhile in the prison to which he was transported, but soon after expires! The Jews had great difficulty in conducting the customary purification of the corpse\*, which they had to perform previous to his burial, since the flesh fell entirely off from his bones!

In the meanwhile the barber is undergoing various examinations and cross-examinations, but continued steadfast in the same declaration; viz. that he did not at all see the Monk put up the paper on his door, but subsequently stepping out of his shop, and seeing it up, asked some by-standers what paper it was, and who fixed it there? They answered him, it was the notice of an auction, put up recently by Padre Thomaso, who went further on. In the course of three examinations the barber named six poor Jews who had been in his shop during the day of the disappearance of the monk. Four of these being in town, were immediately arrested and imprisoned in the Seraglio, and some of them subsequently tortured:

\* The washing of the body of the dead is, amongst the Jews, a religious rite.



the remaining two were in the surrounding villages, engaged in their usual vocation, travelling with their humble stock of merchandize. After a day or two they returned to Damascus, and were arrested, and brought before the French Consul, who threatened them with immediate death if they did not confess. These, however, as well as the four, persisted in their simple tale of innocence, and were some time after liberated. They are still in Damascus to tell their story. It should here be observed, that these poor men, as well as the barber himself, and several other of the poorer Jews, who are now at liberty again, were continually pressed and persuaded by the faithful servant of the French Consulate, Mahommed Telli, to implicate others, especially the great, as the safest means of escaping those tortures with which they were threatened. He was heard to hold like language in open Court, to poor Jews, during the occasional short intervals of their severest tortures. The barber also declared, that on the ominous Wednesday he saw Aslan Farchi, with his brother, Meyer Farchi, two young men, sons of the highly respectable Raphael Farchi, pass his shop, and stopping before it to read the paper on his door. The French Consul immediately directed the two brothers to be arrested, and brought before him. Since, Aslan (in Hebrew called Yehuda) is shortly afterwards accused as one of the murderers of the Monk's servant. His character should be well borne in mind: he is a young man, of about twenty years old; married, but living with his father. He is weak and sickly in constitution, and the butt and joke of the Jews, on account of his notorious childish timidity, which he carries so



far as actually to refuse being alone with his wife, and some of the household are required to sleep in the same room. The French Consul first examined him by himself, and in the course of a long cross-examination the following detailed account of his occupation is obtained:—In the morning of the direful Wednesday, he, with his brother, accompanied their father to the Court of Justice, but I do not quite remember the name, of which Raphael Farchi was a member. They stayed there with their father till just after noon; then, leaving their father in the Court, they went home; in doing so they had to pass the barber's, and then they noticed the paper on his shop-door, stopped to read it, and went on, going towards home. Aslan had some angry words with his mother, upon which he left her room and went into the room of a sister of his, living in the same house, who is a married woman, her husband, however, then being in Bagdad. This sister asked him to write some letters for her to her husband, which he did. By the time he had finished them his father came home; it being very near evening, and hearing he had had some words with his mother, he made him come in and ask his mother's pardon. Signor Isaac di Piecciotto, whose name also ought to be borne in mind, a respectable Jew, a merchant resident in Damascus, son of the late Austrian General-Consul of Aleppo, and himself therefore an Austrian subject, then came in, to inquire after his wife, whom he had heard was there; but not finding her there, and having promised to join a small evening party in the house of a Christian merchant (Georgius Marksaid), he soon left again. The family then sat down to their meal,



which lasted some little while. Having, after this, talked over some common-place matters, the Father (Raphael Farchi), as was his regular habit, himself locked the doors of the house, and they all went to bed.

The French Consul then has Aslan removed, and orders before him the younger brother, Meyer Farchi, who is examined, and confirmed his brother's declaration. The French Consul then, confident that so detailed an account would be contradicted by some one or other, if it were not true, orders the whole family of Raphael Farchi, or nearly so, to be brought before him. He examined each member of the same separately, and it may be presumed that no shadow of contradiction is detected, for Aslan Farchi, as well as the whole family, are let go.—This was Tuesday.

Feb. 12th (Wednesday.)—One of the four persons already mentioned as imprisoned in the common jail, of whom the barber had said, that they, with the other two mentioned before, were in his shop on the eventful Wednesday, was severely flogged to extort a confession of guilt. He persisted in his, and his fellow-sufferers' first declaration, and deposed before the Pasha to a statement similar to what the barber had communicated to the French Consul—that he saw Aslan and Meyer Farchi pass, and reading the paper on the barber's door. Upon this the Pasha sent for the two brothers, who go through much the same process, with the same result, and he lets them all go free again.

About this time it must have been, but the date of this is



not given in any of the documents in my possession, the fact only being stated, that some of the wealthy Jews of the town went to the French Consul, offering a reward of 50,000 piastres to any person whose evidence could lead to a discovery of the supposed murderers; and having, at the demand of the French Consul, given him a bond for the sum, and, on the condition mentioned, the French Consul published the advertisement. The same day, Wednesday, 12th February, the third of the barber's confinement at the French Consul's, notwithstanding all the threats, promises, and persuasions, and the evil suggestions of Mohammed Telli to implicate the great, no clue having been obtained from the barber, he is by the French Consul given over to the Pasha for torture. The Pasha, after having in vain repeated to him the promises of reward, and perfect immunity for any guilty part he might himself have taken in the murder, provided he discovered his accomplices—promises which the French Consul had often pressed upon the poor man—ordered him first to be most dreadfully beaten. This not producing the desired effect, the brutal torture of a certain diabolical machine is applied to him. This instrument has two screws, which are applied to the head in such a manner that the eyes are pressed out of their sockets. The poor barber suffered this agony till his beard became quite white, whilst a convulsive movement set every limb of his body in tremulous motion; he abided, however, in the assertion of entire ignorance as to the fate of the Monk or of his servant. He is now carried into the common prison, where that abominable instrument of cruelty,



Mahommed Telli, becoming his attendant and prompter, blames him for his folly in not implicating the great; as was heard by some of the prisoners, who are now at liberty.

February 14 (Friday).—The poor man is again brought forth, and, under cruel threats, commanded to confess—his already lacerated body trembles, and he cries pitifully, avowing his innocence as before, but in vain. He is the second time laid under the stick (or courbage, as it is termed), and the flogging continues for some time, till his excruciating pains not affording him relief by a timely death, as occurred to Yetschakh Yarah, at last induced him to invent something for his release. He now declares that, on Wednesday evening, February 5th, he saw the monk in company with several of the wealthiest and most respectable Jews, in the Jewish street, near the house of David (in Arabic, Davood) Arari, and that he did not know whence they came, or whither they went. The following are the names of the men he mentions:—Joseph Arari, (an aged man, eighty years old), and three brothers, nephews of the same, Aron (aged fifty-five), Yetschakh (aged fifty), and David Arari (about forty), Joseph Leniado (aged fifty), Moshey Salanickly (aged fifty), and Mussa Abulafia (aged forty); the first five very infirm and sickly persons, the two latter somewhat stronger; all of them merchants of great consideration and wealth. They all deny the barber's statement, and are prepared for torture; but as apprehensions were entertained that they could not endure any severe tortures, on account of their constitutional weakness, a more lenient measure was resorted to. They



were committed each of them to a separate cell, soldiers appointed to stand by them, and not allow them any other posture but standing upon their legs, without sleep being permitted, for thirty-six hours.—So says one of my documents; whilst another, furnished me by a different channel, which agrees with the former in every leading particular, states three days and three nights. I did not think it necessary to ask for the explanation of this apparent contradiction, as I did with reference to other details; but as it will be seen that this inhuman treatment was repeated, it is possible that the first trial was three days and nights, and the second thirty-six hours: I have ample ground for this conjecture. On the same day were arrested the three Rabbies also (mentioned before, under date Monday, February 10th). The term of the thirty-six hours, or three days, being expired, the seven merchants are each separately brought forth for trial: they all deny any knowledge of the monk's disappearance; all of them stating how they were respectively occupied on the evening of the mysterious Wednesday. Here should be especially noticed Mosley Abalafia and Yoseph Laniado; for, though no attention was paid to their references, the truth of their assertions incidentally appeared: the case of the latter deserves particular notice, as exhibiting the spirit, nay, leading to the suspicion of the motive of the trial. The cases of Farach Kataserd and Yetskhack Yarah, already related, and of a poor night-guard, yet to come, lead to the same conjecture. Yoseph Laniado declared, that on the first of February a daughter of his died, and the fifth was therefore the fifth day of his mourning. It is



a well-known custom, that during the first seven days after the death of a near relative, no Jew leaves his house, not even to attend prayers: this is a universal custom, and prayers are said at the house of the mourner. But more than this, he declared, that on the day mentioned (Wednesday), from an early part of the evening till eleven o'clock at night, there were with him, in his own house, two Christian merchants, one of Damascus, and the other of Khashia, a town three days' journey from Damascus. The one of Damascus confirmed this declaration, and the family of Laniado immediately despatching a messenger to Khashia for the other witness, the same sent in his declaration in writing, confirming Laniado's assertion. The Pasha, however, said he could not receive a written deposition—witnesses must appear in person. Alas! this was not a trial to forward, but to defeat, the ends of justice. Khashia being three days' journey from Damascus, before a person could go there and return considerable delay would occur; besides, ample time would be afforded to despatch a man likely to prove dangerous to their ends. After the last-mentioned examination of the seven merchants, the barber was brought forth again, having a free pardon promised him for any guilt of his own, on condition of a satisfactory confession; whilst Mahommed Telli continues to force his advice upon him. The barber first insisted on his last deposition, but when he saw preparations making for his torture, he offered to confess. He then declared, that on the evening of February 5th, the *servant of David Arari came to him*, ordering him to



go to his master's house, in order to bleed him (El Arib); when he came there, he saw the seven merchants mentioned before, and Father Thomaso lying bound in a corner. The seven merchants offered him 1200 piastres if he would kill the monk: he refused, and went away. He was hardly gone (he afterwards added) when he was called back, and they promised him 300 piastres to keep secret what he had seen. He now went home, without yet knowing what became of the unhappy monk. After this deposition the barber is conducted back to his cell, and the seven merchants again brought forth for examination, but singly. They all declare their innocence, and it is therefore determined to subject them to torture. David Arari is the first; but as he received the twentieth stroke he began to foam at the mouth, and fell into all the dreadful convulsions of a patient in what is called the falling sickness. They were then obliged to desist; nor was it expected that the rest would bear the brutal experiment better. Upon this, the French Consul expressed his doubts, feigned or real, if the torture first commanded had been faithfully administered, suggesting that the soldiers may have been seduced to allow his victims to rest their weary limbs, or to sleep; else, it was concluded, they would have confessed. He demanded, therefore, a repetition of the same punishment, and the seven merchants are, therefore, again put on their legs, which would now scarcely support them. The French Consul, by his underlings, and, it is said, sometimes personally, inspected the due performance of their penance of innocence.—This second torture of confinement took place on Feb. 17, and as



if to pass away their time without inconsistency, till this second standing order should have been complied with, they arrested the same day fifty-three young children from four to eight years old, and put them in prison for twenty-eight days. These were almost daily questioned and examined, with threats and promises, and interrogated whether they did not see their fathers kill Padre Thomaso, and other questions of a like nature.—The poor innocent children, knowing of no guilt, tell their little harmless tales. One of the dear innocent children, however, persuaded to answer a seductive question in the affirmative, said his father killed the monk, and then threw him into a certain pit in the Court-yard of his school-master. There indeed was a certain subterraneous vault, not in use, which had been covered a length of time, but into which the children used to look through little holes.

The French Consul, with many more, then took the child to the spot; the pit or vault was opened and searched, but nothing found. While the seven prisoners were yet standing, the barber was again brought forward, and threatened with immediate death, by infliction of the torture, if he did not confess all he knew. The poor fellow being now entirely unmanned, was ready to try as many confessions as they pleased; nor was he at a loss for a confidential teacher.\* He now states that he indeed went to the house of David Arari according to his former declaration on Feb. 5, and in truth took part himself in the murder of the monk.

\* Mahommed Telli.



David Arari began to cut the monk's throat, but beginning to tremble, and dropping the large knife on the ground, he took it up, and completed the fatal deed. On further inquiry he said, he did rather suspect why the murder was committed, and he asked his fellow criminals wherefore it was done? They answered him, that they wanted the blood for certain religious purposes, unknown to himself, and they indeed collected the blood into a silver basin, from which it was poured out into a glass bottle. The Pasha then asked him what was done with the body? to which the barber answered, it was *buried*, not cut up, in the court-yard of David Arari. The Pasha, with a great concourse of people, then went to the house of David Arari, taking the barber with them, who lay across an ass, supported by persons on each side, as he was not yet able to sit or ride on an animal, nor could he walk. The stupefied barber is then desired to point out the spot where the corpse was buried, and he fixed on a place in the court-yard, beautifully laid out with various coloured marble. It was evident that this spot could not have been so newly opened, and therefore the Pasha, apprehending deception, grew angry, and threatened the barber with instant death if he deceived him, asking him sternly, at the same time, "Do you mean to say that this place was opened, and then newly thus laid out?" Upon which the barber, recollecting himself, interrupted—"Oh, no! I am mistaken, it is there, in that room;" pointing to one not quite finished (the house being new). The place he now indicated was dug up, and so was a second and third, the barber continuing to vary the localities: but no trace what-



soever of the monk could be found. This disappointment excited great sensation amongst those who anticipated the fate of the poor Jews. Before they left the house, however, Marad Fatali, the servant of David Arari, of whom the barber had said, that he came to call him on the fatal evening, is taken by the Pasha into a separate room and interrogated, but as the barber had not implicated him, and he himself *asserting ignorance of crime*, without leading by his own manner to any suspicion, he was let go again. The Pasha then privately examined a female slave in the service of the same family, a Mahomedan, promising her the most tempting rewards if she would confess: she however replied, that she knew of nothing, and added, *she is certain that no murder was committed in her master's house*. The Pasha then drew the sword, and threatened to cut her head off, if she did not speak the truth. She insisted, however, that what she said was truth; adding, I am a Moslem, and only the slave of these Jews, and if I knew any thing against them I should not deny it. The Pasha, with his people, then went home. This took place on the 23d Feb., by which time the seven merchants had been released from their standing position, had undergone various examinations and interrogation, and were now simply confined, not without hopes even being entertained of their entire liberation, since the barber's deposition had been positively falsified by a reference to facts. The next day, however, Feb. 24th, the French Consul arrested Marad Fatali, the servant of David Arari, who underwent seven examinations, but nothing of a suspicious character was elicited. Two Jewish night-



guards were also arrested. All the streets of Damascus have a gate at each end, which is closed at night, a porter standing by it, without whose knowledge no one can pass or repass after night-fall. The two porters of the Jewish street were also arrested, and some of these cruelly tortured, till one of the last mentioned, a man sixty years old, died from the severity of the punishment. This poor man was a very important witness in the case, as his station was just opposite where, some time after, the bones were taken out, part of which were affirmed to be human; and of Padre Thomaso. He died however of torture, in the attestation of the truth of his deposition, that he saw none of the persons suspected pass or repass his gate.

During several days about this period, many Jewish houses were searched, some dug up, in consequence it is said of the declaration of the Sheikhs, already mentioned, who pointed out many houses in succession, where they affirmed Padre Thomaso would be found, dead or alive. Nothing, however, was found. The barber feigned to recollect that the body was buried in the Gardens of Raphael Farchi, which are close by the house of David Arari. The Emir Ali, with a detachment of soldiers, followed by a great concourse of persons, and accompanied by the barber, repaired to the garden, half of which was dug up in various spots; but as nothing was found, the people become so enraged at the barber that they tore down the branches of the trees, and began to beat him. He was however lodged again in his prison cell. Wednesday, Feb. 26th, the French Consul asked the Pasha to allow him once more to take



the barber into his house for private examination, but sent him back in the evening, having elicited nothing satisfactory from him. In the meantime the Pasha ordered Marad Fatali again to be arrested, who was at once put under frightful tortures, and not confessing any guilt was imprisoned for the night in the same cell with the barber. He was brought up the next day, but yet persisting in his former declarations, was returned to prison. After another day's confinement with the barber he was brought up again, and prepared for torture. He then offered to confess, and declared to the same tale with the barber, and also confessed himself an accomplice, wherein he contradicts the barber, who never acknowledged the presence of this fellow. The barber was therefore brought up again in the evening of Feb. 27th, is assured of pardon, and again pressed to confess. Mahomed Telli must not however be forgotten; this individual continued to have free access to both these persons, and was present at their trials. The barber then declared that the servant was indeed very active in the murder, like himself; and after these two persons had been alternately several times examined during the same evening, they came at last to an agreement in the following statement:—

That the barber and some of the seven merchants held the monk, while the servant cut his throat. The blood was carefully collected, which, they were informed, upon inquiry, was necessary to be mixed up with the unleavened bread. They did not before know that such a practice existed amongst the Jews. After the monk was quite



dead, the two, barber and servant, cut up the body by limbs, and threw each part, one after another, into a large kind of mortar, and broke all the bones into small pieces. They then put the whole into a sack, carried it to a certain spot, where they let it down, piece by piece, through a hole, into the public sewer—a current stream, which runs underground through the whole town, passing also the Jewish street\*. The place which they thus pointed out is some distance from, and not in the same street with, the house of David Arari; the way from the one to the other leading through the gate, of which the night-guard was lately killed under the infliction of torture.

The next day, Feb. 28th, the water being cut off without the city, the French Consul, with his followers, having the two miserable sufferers, barber and servant, carried before him on donkeys, (neither of them could yet walk, or support themselves alone on the animals), and accompanied by a detachment of soldiers, and large numbers of the enraged populace, repaired to the place, which is then opened, and certain persons are ordered to go down and search in the mud in the bottom of the channel. The French Consul insisted that a stream of running water came from a certain house near by, belonging to a Jewish family of Prussian subjects. Whether this conjecture was true or false I have not inquired; however, the French Consul is stated to have rushed into the house with a “courage,” and struck a young woman in it, demanding

\* The stream runs through most of the houses.



their intention in agitating the bottom of the channel, from which he inferred some guilty design. The name of this family is Romano. I have it on good authority that the Prussian Consul lodged a formal complaint, at the proper quarter, against the French Consul for this outrage. The young woman is the sister of the master of the house, and consequently also a Prussian subject. However, the persons in the channel then threw up a number of bones, without either *flesh*, *skin*, or *hair*; also a piece of shapeless rag of thick cloth, such as the "turbouches" are made of, but which appears to be black, though parts are red. The barber, who used to shave the monk, affirms the latter to be part of the cap worn by the monk; and the bones are considered to be partly human and partly animal. They are so declared by some of their doctors—or rather quacks—which would be a more just appellation. Those considered human are buried with great pomp, and registered as bones of Father Thomaso. All the bones put together did not amount to above what would constitute the third or fourth part of a human frame.

It is quite impossible adequately to describe the precarious state all Damascus was then in; it had been bad enough for the last three weeks, but now the ignorant population were excited beyond all conception by the unrestrained and ungovernable tempest of their vilest passions. They ceased to be human beings, and resembled more the wild beasts of the forest. The day before these bones were found, a certain Arab Christian, Shiblee (Seibly) Agoob, arrives from Sidon (Sida), whether of his



own accord, or sent for, I could not learn. The latter supposition is the more probable; at any rate, he was allowed to take part in the proceedings. This man was some years ago in the employ of the Government at Damascus; he was then enriching himself by the spoil and extortions exacted from the Jews, till the distinguished Israelite, Maslem Raph Farchi, brought a suit against him. Shiblee was found guilty, obliged to restore various sums to the Jews, and condemned to eighteen months' imprisonment. This, of course, does not assist his affection for the Jews. The very day of his arrival he went into the Jewish quarter, and vented his revengeful fury against the poor Israelites. He then, amongst other things, declared, "To-morrow I will here dig up the remains of Father Thomaso." He happened to threaten this just near the spot where the bones were now found, pointing with his finger to the very spot. Whether from this, or from other circumstances, or all put together, a rumour prevailed that the few bones found were deposited there by the enemies of the Jews, which could now be done easily, since the night-guard, who formerly stood on his watch just opposite, had been removed by a barbarous death, as above stated, and no second person could be procured to undertake so dangerous a post. Other most extraordinary rumours prevailed, of course, amongst the enemies of the defenceless people, who studiously suppress and villanously misrepresent every thing they know in their favour. For some time, the vilest persons, taking advantage of this state of public feeling, arising out of these occurrences, pressed into Jewish houses for the purpose of extorting money—some-



times large amounts from the more wealthy, of the poorer smaller sums ; and when there was no money to be had, they took effects. Amongst others, there was a certain native Christian, Seed Naavee, who violently took away a sack of flour from a poor Algerine Jew. The poor fellow, who used to deal in this article, and had already been robbed of every thing else he had, in desperation went to the Pasha and complained. Seed Navee is put in prison ; the next day, however, he was liberated, without trial and without restitution. This is a well-known fact. It is asserted by persons entitled to confidence, that, whilst this man was yet in prison, both his mother and his wife ran up and down in the Christian street, calling out, " If Seed Navee be touched, or if you don't interest yourselves for his immediate liberation, we shall bring misfortunes upon you all—we shall discover the whole plot—shall shew where Father Thomaso is !" The French Consul, on hearing this, went to the Pasha, and demanded the liberation of Seed Navee, the women never being questioned what they meant by their threats.

Whilst I am at this part of my narrative, I may also mention that, after the death of Yetskhack Yarah, some Jews went to the place where he had said he saw the monk and his servant, near sunset ; they found there several persons, Christians and Mahommedans, who confirmed the deposition of the deceased. They then went home, with the intention of having the persons called up before the Pasha. Other Jews thought, however, that the persons should first be asked whether they



would come forward and declare before the Pasha that they had seen Father Thomaso on the evening of the 5th of February. Upon this some denied the fact altogether, whilst others said, "No, no; although we have seen them, if we be called before the Pasha, we shall say we have not. Farash Kataserd is imprisoned, and Yarah is dead, because they said they saw the men, and we shall not endanger our lives for your sakes." Thus the poor Jews, with a heavy heart, returned to their homes. But without entering further into similar details, it is sufficient to observe, that whatever probabilities there may otherwise exist that Padre Thomaso and his servant be dead, arising from their continued disappearance, for any thing that had been elicited in the course of all the investigations that have hitherto taken place, they may both be yet alive.

It was then definitively taken for granted that the bones found were in part human; that they, as well as the rag of a cap, belonged to Father Thomaso, and that the Jews killed him. It should be observed, that the French Consul now compelled the poor Jews to pay the 50,000 piastres promised by them as a reward to any persons whose information could lead to a discovery of the supposed murderers.

Friday night, Feb. 28th.—A process of torture was resorted to, that has certainly never been surpassed for enormity, and is too gross and shocking to be here described. Yetskhack Arari was the first; his various tortures continue for three hours; but, as far as he could yet speak, he asserted his innocence. The barber was then



brought up, and made to repeat his last deposition in his presence; and Yetskhack Arari being thereupon questioned as to what he now could say, assented to the barber's confession; and they both were confined in the same cell.

Saturday, Feb. 29th.—The remaining six were brought up, one by one, in the presence of Yetskhack Arari. It is too awful to describe the tortures applied to them. David Arari and Mussa Abulafia are reduced to assent to the depositions of Yetskhack Arari and the barber. The other four, two of whom soon die, never to the end allowed the truth of these extorted depositions, wrung from the agony of those who could no longer bear the atrocious cruelties practised upon them. Enquiry was now directed for the discovery of the blood. David and Yetskhack Arari say that Mussa Abulafia had taken possession of it. Mussa Abulafia denied this, and is again subjected to torture. He then said, he indeed had it, but delivered it up to Mussa Salanikly, one of the seven impeached by the barber. Salanikly, however, bore every torture inflicted upon him, and insisted on his entire innocence and ignorance of all knowledge of blood.

Sunday, March 1st. — The two brothers, David and Yetskhack Arari, were again brought up for further trial, when they again deny their last day's confession of guilt, which, they say, was extorted from them by torture, and made in the hope of a speedy execution, instead of an excruciating and lingering death. The remaining five were now also brought up; and now let humanity



shudder, and turn her eyes from the refined bloodshed that was now executed—a bloodshed, however, not by quickly dispatching, but by demoniacly extracting the life of innocent men by torments not inflicted on the most guilty,—and more than a brute beast could bear. Yetskhack and David Arari are again reduced to make their former confessions. Mussa Abulafia is now tortured to give up the blood; he then said, I have secreted it at home in my house. The French Consul, always alive to cruelty, then accompanies Mussa Abulafia to his house, followed, as usual, by large crowds, and Mussa Abulafia having now undertaken to give up what he never possessed, unlocked a cupboard, and feigned to examine it. He then asked his wife, who was in despair all this while to see her husband so lacerated, and apparently quite beside herself, “What have you done with the blood?” The poor woman, as in a fit of phrenzy, exclaimed, “What blood had you?” He answered, “I have blood—only give me a knife, and you can take my life’s blood, and then say—this is it.” It is stated, that when the French Consul heard this, he, like a madman, attacked both Abulafia and his wife. He then laid a rope round his neck, threatening to strangle him; and in the attempt to pull the rope, he laid his poor victim prostrate at his feet; and not satisfied with this, it is related that he dragged him about in the court-yard with the rope around his neck. The French Consul then ordered both M. Abulafia and his wife to be conducted to the Court of the Pasha. I ought to mention that this wanton and ungenerous proceeding of the French Consul was the means of throwing an additional victim



into his hands; for Abulafia, almost as dead, through the infliction of maddening torture, had implicated his wife when he said that he had entrusted the blood to her.

It is remarkable that the Pasha, in this whole proceeding, never laid hands on a woman (the Mohammedan slave of David Arari excepted), whilst the French Consul vented his rage now a second time against a female. The unhappy pair are now brought to Court; a tempest of furious threats overwhelms the poor woman, and she falls to the ground in a swoon. Nobody attends to her, but she recovers of herself, and then is whipped out of the Court. Now it is that Mussa Abulafia offered to embrace Mahommedanism; he is received into the faith,\* and assumes the name of Mahommed Effendi. He is again interrogated, and says he gave the blood to Rabbi Yacob Anthabi: this is the fourth variation. This enfeebled old man endured such an ordeal of torture that a person would almost be inclined to think he must have been strengthened by supernatural aid, but he denied all guilt, both of himself and of all the others. It is now late at night, and the legalized assassins resign themselves to sweet repose, leaving their mangled victims to pour out their souls in prison, to be prepared for the scene of the next day.

The discovery of the blood is now despaired of, and the next day, March 2d, a desperate attempt is made to bring the four that hitherto remained immoveable in the assertion

\* He has since recanted.



of their innocence, to a confession of guilt. The attempt proved fruitless; but the old man of 80 years of age, Joseph Arari, together with Joseph Leniado, who had two witnesses to prove his innocence, die in consequence of their tortures. Here should be noticed, that when the seven, as also the Rabbies, were this day brought before the Pasha, his Excellency commenced by exhorting them to confess the truth, which is all, he said, he desired to know. Upon this the two Araris, that had previously, when under the torture, criminated themselves, said, "The truth is, that we know of no murder; but if you will torture us again, we shall again return to our former deposition." They, like the rest, are again tortured, and again confess themselves guilty. The apostate, Mussa Abulafia, now Mahomed Effendi, abode by his last deposition.

I here cannot avoid to notice some absurd attempts of this cowardly apostate to prove from the Talmud that the Jews are required to make use of human blood. He asserted that those blanks in the Talmud, which every Rabbinical scholar knows formerly contained allusions to our Lord, some even very good ones, others very doubtful, but which passages are, however, obtainable, and may be had separately, notwithstanding they were suppressed by the strict Rabbinical excommunication, which forbade the printing of every allusion to our Lord and his religion—whether the allusion be good or bad—these passages, he said, now not printed, but still acted upon, contained the bloody injunctions on which he and his fellows had acted. Rabbi Yacob Anthabi, however, ex-



plained the matter, denying the assertion. Upon this a certain Frenchman, called in the Italian document from which I quote this—"Il Lazariste Francese P. Fusti"—who having long fatigued himself by night, for by day he had to serve his master, the French Consul, searching, I presume, through the books, which the Convents so readily afforded him for the purpose, in order to find something against the Jews, produced some garbled quotations (I believe, four in number), from what my Italian informant calls "La prompta Bibliotheca di Lucio Ferrari, tom iii. page 297, ed. di Bologna." These quotations, however, do not in any ways speak of blood. The monks, however, were very industrious to distribute these quotations in Arabic amongst the vulgar throughout the country, accompanied with the most malignant calumnies and misrepresentations of the affair at Damascus. I found some of these extracts in Arabic, in Tyre (Tiour): in Beyrout there is scarcely a person without them; and in Alexandria I find them equally common in the Italian language.

Before I quit the affairs of Padre Thomaso, I would notice that, upon my arrival at Damascus, March 30th, and having some knowledge on the subject, I challenged any one to produce a single well-founded suspicion against the Jews, to shew a reason why the Jews were arrested; which they could not. At the same time I strongly protested against the calumny that the Jews use human blood, and was able to refute certain false allegations which had been circulated; such as, that Jews dip a handkerchief in Christian blood, dry it, and burn it to ashes; and the day after a Jewess



is married, these ashes are strewn on a hard-boiled egg, which is eaten by the young couple. This invention, I am grieved to say, gave rise to new tortures, and new investigations concerning the murder of the monk, which for the last month had been considered as settled. It was in vain to conjecture, as some gentlemen gratuitously did, that the Jews elsewhere may not do it, and that those of Damascus may form a fanatical sect by themselves. It was equally vain to say, that though the murders might not have been committed for the sake of blood, the Jews might still be guilty—for all the confessions extorted by the most abhorrent cruelties from a few cravens, rested exclusively on the assertion, which was attempted to be proved by the apostate Abulafia, alias Mahommed Effendi, “That the Jews, as a religious body, make use of human blood.” Some of the seven, yet alive, were then anew put to torture, to give up the watch, cross, and other property, which Padre Thomaso had about him. But who could give up what he never possessed? Not a rag could be found. Mangled and torn, the poor Jews would willingly have given their own watches and clothes, if they knew they would be received as those of the monk. The last tortures that took place were on the body of Rabbi Yacob Anthabi, who was required to give the Pasha a declaration in writing that the Jews want human blood, but the old man would rather die than give such a false declaration. This last case of torture took place after I had left Damascus; I was informed of it by letter, while at Beyrout.



We now must return to the beginning of March: even the case of the monk being set aside, as fully disposed of, the servant of the same was now for the first time thought of, and demanded of the Jews. Here, however, is to be observed, that in consequence of the arrest and imprisonment of the distinguished Raphael Farchi, and another highly respectable and wealthy Israelite, Nathan Stambuly, on neither of whom the least suspicion had been cast by any one, which took place Feb. 21st, several of the remaining Jews of wealth fled or hid themselves, concluding, as they all did, that the investigation for murder was a mere false pretence, whilst to possess themselves of the persons of Jews of consideration and riches, for some purpose or other, was the real disguised object. Sig. Isaac di Piecciotto remained at Damascus, because he was an Austrian subject, and had therefore nothing to apprehend.

The first person that was applied to was the previously examined and tortured Morad Fatali, the servant of David Arari, and he had a confession ready at hand; but, strange to say, never made it known till now, owing, no doubt, to his instructors. He declared that after the monk had been murdered, and his minced corpse deposited in the common sewer, his master sent him to Mared Farchi, the richest Jew in Damascus, whose wealth is said to be enormous, to tell him that the monk was now dead, and that they, Mared Farchi and others, must now some how or other get rid of the monk's servant. This message, he said, he delivered to Mared Farchi, in the presence of Sig. Isaac di Piecciotto. The



next morning, he said, Mared Farchi and Piecciotto, together with A. Stambuly, Meyer Farchi, and Aslan Farchi, came to his master's house, and said to his master, in his (the servant's) hearing, we last night killed the monk's servant, as you sent us word, in the house of Meyer Farchi. This confession, however, was thought unsatisfactory; that stupid teacher, Mohammed Telli, had not yet been long enough in the French Consulate to understand his business as he ought. With regard to the murder of the monk, it was taken for granted that there is some mystery in the number seven, and that no murder could be committed by less Jews for religious purposes. In the present case, however, five only had been mentioned. The persecutors of the poor Jews were again hard pressed, to account how a secret injunction could be so generally known as the murders in Damascus were, amongst the Jews of that city, who had been denounced in the confessions as privy to the commission of it, besides those who committed, the supposed murders. There were yet four acknowledged Rabbies (the three above, resident, and Rabbi Marmon Torree, a native of Gibraltar): the first three have endured great tortures, and are in prison to this day. These were not implicated in the murder, but they, of course, ought to have been privy to what was to be done—at least to the supposed injunction. To support this hypothesis, they maliciously represented that three of the seven implicated in the murder of the monk were Rabbies, and inferred that the law required three Rabbies and four laymen. It is, however, false that any one, comprised in either the first imputation of the murder of the



monk, or the last (not yet complete seven) accused of the murder of the servant, is a Rabbi; not one of them supported that character; all the eleven are laymen — all merchants, and men of great wealth.

There was a third most important deficiency in the declaration of Morad Fatali, the tortured servant of David Arari; he did not see the murder committed with his own eyes. Several days passed away, when he gave the following much better finished deposition. He said he knew that the murder was to be committed (the sacrifice slain), in the house of Meyer Farchi, and out of pure curiosity went there to see the ceremony performed. There he found the already-mentioned five merchants, as also Yoseph Farchi and Mussa Abalafia, these murdered the monk's servant in his presence, he also assisting in it. The blood, he said, was collected as in the previous murder, and Mussa Abalafia took possession of it: the body was served as that of the monk, and sunk into a branch of the same underground channel, as before, at some distance. Of the seven, however, now accused, only Piecciotto is to be had, and he was immediately arrested by the Pasha. This arrest takes place as early as the 6th of March. Piecciotto, however, being an Austrian subject, the truly honest Austrian Consul of Damascus, Sig. Merlato is applied to, and cannot do otherwise than demand *his* subject. To this the French Consul objects, and protests against the Austrian Consul's attempt to take Piecciotto out of the hands of the Pasha, who had hitherto killed only four Jews, and crippled a dozen or two by brutal tortures. The



Austrian Consul, who hitherto stood entirely aloof, and knew nothing but what report brought him, was now absolutely compelled to demand his subject, whose conduct was impeached by these forced confessions. And what were they?—the deposition of Morad Fatali?—which could not pass an European Court of justice. It is therefore certain, that if Piecciotto be judged on European principles, disgrace and infamy must cover the heads of the vile persecutors, and every man of humane feelings must rejoice that the Austrian Consul acted as he did. He now asks the French Consul why Isaac Piecciotto should be arrested? The French Consul refers him to the Pasha: the Pasha declared that he has no European charge against Piecciotto.

The now Austrian Consul makes repeated inquiry, and discovers that those reports which had formerly reached him, which he considered as true, and led him to suspect the Jews, notwithstanding his disapproval of the use of the torture, were false inventions. This was enough to make a man like Sig. Merlato—of strong religious feelings, and impressed with a deep sense of justice—defender of the innocent and oppressed. As his unworthy colleagues could not dissuade him from his duty, they now tried to spread the report that he was bribed by the Jews. It is not necessary to answer this calumny; it is enough to say, that whether he be bribed or not, it is not on his evidence that any thing rests, but on facts over which Sig. Merlato could have no control. The reason, however, why Isaac Piecciotto was arrested, is, that he long ago forbade Mahommed Telli, now engaged in the service



of the French Consulate, to enter his house. For this, Telli had a strong hatred against him, and the time for revenge had arrived. Before the Austrian Consul demanded Piecciotto, the latter was examined by the Pasha, and declared that the evening of the 5th of February (of the supposed murders) he spent with a pretty large party until after midnight, and that he neither was, nor could have been, at the house of Marad or Meyer Farchi; that in consequence of the lateness of the hour the previous night, he rose very late the next morning; and before he was dressed a gentleman came to him, with whom he went out, and thus spent his time until noon with the persons whom he names, and therefore was not, and could not have been, in the house of David Arari, in the morning, as Murad Fattal had declared.—I'll now dismiss the case of Piecciotto, and therefore here add what belongs to a later period. The witnesses to whom he referred were examined at the English Consulate at Damascus, and certain absentees, at the Austrian Consulate at Beyrout, since the witnesses referred to belonged to these two Consuls, whilst a third party of witnesses were in connexion with the Austrian Consulate at Damascus. Any one of these three parties would have been sufficient, but the individual examined at the English Consulate at Damascus is of peculiar interest. Georgius Marksood is a native Christian merchant of Damascus. He had given his conclusive evidence in favour of Piecciotto, but nevertheless could not bring himself to believe but that all the Jews charged, Piecciotto not excepted, were guilty of the supposed murder. Had Isaac Piecciotto been alone in his company on the



fatal evening of the alleged murder, he might have been unwilling to have acknowledged it ; but fortunately, as the party with whom I. Piecciotto was, consisted of about twelve persons, from an early part of the evening till past midnight of the 5th of February, there could therefore be no doubt of the fact. The reason why this individual was examined at the English Consulate was his being in the service of the Hon. East India Company, and therefore under English protection.

I cannot pass over, in silence, a singular altercation which took place between the honourable Israelite, Isaac Piecciotto, and the French Consul, in open Court, on the 19th of March. M. Ratti Menton, entirely uncalled for, went to the Court, in order to be present when Piecciotto was, of his own accord, and with the consent of his Consul, confronted with the servant of David Arari. The French Consul, seeing the case turning against his schemes, provoked a quarrel with the accused, and, Spanish-bred, called him, in spite of the numerous witnesses to his innocence—" Assassin !" Piecciotto, however, with more justice, retorted the charge upon his opponent ; which presented a curious scene.

The indefatigable French Consul, with his faithful spies, afterwards succeeded in discovering Aslan Farchi, who had hid himself in his uncle's house. Reference must be made now to what has been before said of this Aslan Farchi being of weak intellect. But now mark the proceeding. He was arrested, and imprisoned in the house of the notorious



Mahommed Telli. Having been there long enough to have learnt a good confession, but proving rather a dull pupil, the French Consul took him into his own house, where he remained for several days : but no confession was produced. He was then delivered over for torture to the Pasha: it being at the time evening, he was for the night put into the same cell with Morad Fatali, the servant of David Arari, the accuser of poor Arari. The next morning he was brought before the Pasha, before whom he yet denied all knowledge of the murder, and the Pasha then ordered him to be beaten for four hours in succession. Poor Aslan began to tremble. The Pasha repeated his furious threats, and added, that if he would confess, no harm should be done him ; and so saying, ordered a “ bug-al-aman ” (a safe conduct) to be written for him. His Excellency takes this paper in the one hand, and the “ courbage ” in the other, and sternly addressing the half-dead Aslan, bid him choose either torture and death, or the written acquittal on condition of confession. What might be expected from a character like Aslan ? He chose the paper, and made the same deposition with Morad Fatali ; but although, in the course of his drilling, he had learnt the principal movements, the more artificial manœuvres were entirely neglected ; for the Pasha now takes both the servant and Aslan into the house of M. Farchi, where the murder of the monk’s servant is said to have been committed ; and, in the presence of many persons, the two are examined separately. The servant, Morad, first points out the spots where the head and where the feet of the supposed murdered person lay—who stood to his right, and who to his left, whilst the murder



was perpetrated. This is written down; but, to their vexation, Aslan now contradicts his confessing-partner in every detail. Whether this arose from mere forgetfulness, or from its never having been thought of whilst under tuition, I leave to others to decide. It is very material here to observe, that as the scribe was going to write down the declarations of Aslan, in the same manner as he took down those of Marad, the Pasha stopped him, saying, he need not write down this nonsense; we have evidence enough.

The remaining five who are accused cannot be found; and the Pasha then advertises 5000 piastres reward, to be given to any person who can give information about them. A sickly young man, the son of the accused Meyer Farchi, who was hid in the house of a Moslem washer-woman, is then arrested, to say where his father is. He declares ignorance. He is placed under the courbage, and after having received between twenty and thirty lashes, the poor young man, while he again declares his innocence and ignorance, said, perhaps if his mother were sent for, she might be able to give them the desired information. The unhappy woman is sent for, and as she would not betray her husband, her son is again put under the courbage in her presence. She suffers him to receive 300 lashes, but the maternal feelings at last prevail over the conjugal, and she betrays her husband. He is immediately brought in, and the Pasha begins the examination jeeringly, by asking the unhappy man how many pits full of gold he had, and similar questions. He soon, however, becomes more serious, and demands confession of guilt. Meyer Farchi,



as a man fully resolved upon his course, then said to the Pasha—If your Excellency's object be only to know the truth, then I tell your Excellency that neither I, nor my fellow-accused, know any thing of these murders. If the object, however, be simply to force us to confessions, then your Excellency need only to inform us what confessions will suffice, and we are ready to make them, without the use of any torture whatever. He is then committed to prison ; but, with an infamous mockery of justice, he is made to pay the 5000 piastres for his having been discovered. The remaining four continue undiscovered.

I have yet to mention an important point, belonging to a previous stage of the proceedings.—March 7th. The French Consul, with his confederates, go to the spot indicated by Morad Fatali, where the suspected body of the monk's servant is said to have been deposited. It is in the same channel as the monk's, though a different branch of it. The place is opened, and bones are found again ! However, instead of a rag, or part of a cap, a formless membrane is found—subsequently called liver. The Jews, however, say it was an after-birth ; and there is also part of a shoe. It being thirty-two days after the supposed murder, and having lain in the mud all this while, it is accordingly recognized by one of the party as part of a shoe worn by the monk's servant. But how great was the consternation of the French Consul, when Dr. Lograsso, the only man in Damascus, it appears, who knows any thing of medicine or anatomy, declared all the bones now found to be indisputably, one and all, animal bones ! It is said that the French Consul



was exceedingly vexed with the doctor for making this discovery.—Having mentioned some of the persons who assisted in the horrible scenes just hastily concluded; such as Scibli Ayvol, Mahommed Telli, the Lazariste P. Fusti, I would also name a few others. Such as,

1. M. B——, ex-Consular Agent, and attached to the French Consulate, who is said to have been at most of the tortures inflicted on the poor Jews.

2. Dr. M——, private physician to H. E. Sherriff Pasha, who spared no trouble, as a most zealous assistant, especially in exhorting his master to act in the views of the French Consulate.

3. Francesco S——, a quack doctor from Aleppo, who served, as occasion required, whether as dragoman, prompter, spy, or other employment; and holding such high offices, is reported to have sold, at a high price, his protection to the poor terrified Jews.

I have not been able to ascertain correctly the origin of Count Ratti Menton, the French Consul at Damascus. I am, however, inclined to believe that he must have received his education in Spain, and had for his preceptors, public or private, those ministers of a wicked system, who, in the last days of the “Holy Inquisition,” probably grew fat on the blood of their victims. If so, he certainly has proved himself an apt and docile pupil. His late Court of Inquisition at Damascus may well vie with



the most horrid deeds of that hell-born machine. Count de Ratti Menton is understood to be a man of about forty years of age, and at the time the Inquisition was abolished may have been a student of about twenty ; and at that time, perhaps, determined to expend his vengeance on Infidels and Heretics, whenever an opportunity offered.

The English Consul I could not win for the cause of humanity in favour of the afflicted Jews, because he believed, as he expressly and implicitly told me, that the Jews are in the habit of killing Christians, in order to secure their blood for superstitious purposes. He also believed the Jews of Damascus actually guilty of the late murders, which is the more surprising, for it could not have escaped his observation, that, from the nature of the brutal proceedings adopted towards the accused, and especially from the character of those witnesses examined in his own office, that the Jews could not be otherwise than innocent of the charge brought against them.

*The Tortures employed were—*

- 1st. Flogging.
- 2d. Soaking persons in large tanks of cold water, in their clothes.
- 3d. The head machine, by which the eyes are pressed out of their sockets.
- 4th. 'Tying up the tender parts, and ordering soldiers to twist and horribly dispose them into such contortions that the poor sufferers grew almost mad from pain.
- 5th. Standing upright for three days, without being allowed any other posture, not even to lean against the



walls ; and when they would fall down, are aroused up by the by-standing sentinels with their bayonets.

6th. Being dragged about in a large court by their ears, until the blood gushed out.

7th. Having thorns driven in between their nails and the flesh of fingers and toes.

8th. Having fire set to their beards, till their faces are singed.

9th. Having candles held under their noses, so that the flame arises up into their nostrils. This last brutality was one night carried on with such pitiless perseverance, that the wax dropped upon the poor sufferer's breasts : it was in the night, and the Pasha being present could no longer endure the sight : he then went away, but put no stop to it.

I must not omit to pay my tribute of praise to the constancy of the poor Mahomedan female slave of David Arari. All the efforts to extort a lie from her mouth were fruitless ; she disregarded equally the temptations and threats held out to her. She was subsequently arrested ; and when I had left Damascus, had already been forty days in prison. She was almost daily examined, and generally also tortured, but nevertheless she remained firm as a rock in the assertion of her master's innocence. About seventy Jews (besides the sixty-three children) had been arrested, and most of them tortured. But at the time I left Damascus, they had all been set free again, with the exception of about sixteen.

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Mr. Pieritz reached Damascus on the 30th March, and returned from thence early in May ; and, in a letter ad-



dressed to the Jews of Alexandria\*, after his minute investigation of this extraordinary case, he thus describes the result of his inquiry:—" *I found the whole charge against the Jews there a vile fabrication, and that all means and right of legal defence was denied them; while the most cruel tortures were employed to extort from them false confessions of guilt.*"

\* Vide Appendix.



It seems indeed strange, that, at a moment when attempts are making to extend the blessings of civilization, to promote kindly feelings amongst men, and to improve the general condition of society, the unfortunate descendants of the children of Israel should have become the objects of a fierce and malignant persecution. What makes this calamity the more lamentable is, that the persecutors bear the name of *Christians*—the leader of these abominable cruelties being a European Christian; representing, too, one of the most civilized and influential states of Christian Europe! Encouraged by the example of those who are assumed to be the pioneers in a course in which others less enlightened may safely follow, can it be a subject of wonder that an ignorant and fanatic population should have embraced those views which the more intelligent and better informed did not scruple to adopt? The more these infamous proceedings are canvassed, the more the folly, nay, the wickedness, of the calumnies will be manifest. What is the charge brought against the Jews of Damascus? It is pretended that, in some customary rites observed by the Jews, they are enjoined to make use of Christian blood. For this vile purpose an old friar and his servant had been inveigled, it is said, into the house of a wealthy Jew of Damascus, where the most opulent of that faith were assembled, who deliberately murdered the friar, by suspending him by the heels, his throat being cut by some of the party, whilst others caught his blood in a basin, or, according to another version (for these pretended doings



are variously described), in a large bottle; his head being afterwards severed from his body, his flesh cut into the smallest fragments, his bones pounded in a mortar, his clothes burnt—and other similar fabulous statements. The servant is presumed to have been disposed of in a similar manner; but there appears no detailed account of the ceremonies that took place at his execution. The extraordinary discovery of an old shoe, in a sewer, appeared sufficiently decisive of the Jews having availed themselves of the opportunity of securing both the master and the man for the same sacrifice! Such is the fiction which torture has wrung from the dreadful treatment inflicted on a poor miserable barber, who was the first victim of this persecution, and whose pains and sufferings have been the fertile source of those subsequent proceedings, by which many innocent persons have been exposed to dreadful and heart-rending tortures. Such is the story which may yet provoke a repetition of calamities to a community, who have, during many centuries, been exposed to the severest trials, but who have borne their misfortunes with meekness and resignation.

The first thing that must strike every one who has read the account of this pretended murder, is its utter inconsistency with all those principles of conduct which guide the human mind, and are the basis of its actions. It savours far more strongly of that class of Eastern inventions which, under the title of Arabian Nights, have so often fascinated our youthful hours, than of any real or possible enormity perpetrated even by the most depraved class of men. It



is not at all reconcilable with any of the principles of human action, that a number of persons should have agreed to commit the atrocity here imputed to them. If they were capable of engaging in the deed for the purpose assigned, would they have selected an individual sure to be missed, about whose disappearance an investigation would certainly be instituted, not only with the ordinary scrutiny, but with a determination to devote the whole power and authority of the government to discover the unhappy victim, to learn the particulars of his fate, and to inflict summary punishment on the offenders? Allowing that the murderers were reckless in the choice of the individual, would they be so indifferent to their own preservation as to have committed the deed in the undisguised public manner described in the agonized replies of the barber, to the questions suggested by those who were inflicting on him the most horrible cruelties? This fabulous story may, therefore be either looked upon as asserting a combination on the part of a number of persons to commit a cold-blooded murder on this priest and his servant, or as intimating that there was a union of fanatic individuals, impelled by religious bigotry to engage in a horrible and most unnatural crime. Whichever position is adopted, its absurdity will be equally apparent. Is it likely, that the most opulent merchants of the city of Damascus would combine with a poor obscure barber, for the purpose of savagely murdering this Catholic priest and his servant—persons with whom they may be supposed to have had little or no intercourse, and against whom it may be believed they had no cause for entertaining malice? The thing is impossible.



Let it now be supposed that the murder was undertaken to accomplish some religious object; and it may be asked whether, in such a case, those who have been the unfortunate victims of this accusation are the persons who would be engaged in such a transaction? Who are the persons implicated? Merchants!—a class of men who seldom involve themselves in hazardous enterprises unconnected with commercial pursuits, whose attention is usually devoted to secular affairs, and who leave spiritual matters to those appointed to take charge of them.

Surely, if the murder had been perpetrated for religious purposes, the individuals engaged in it would have been spiritual persons, not laymen. The story describes the murder as committed with considerable ceremony. There is the description of the victim bound, the knife, the throat cut, the silver basin to catch the blood. Who should take part in such an imitation of religious sacrifice but some spiritually ordained person? Surely such an important religious affair, involving, too, heavy moral consequences, would not have been left to the uncertain knowledge of a few merchants, however wealthy and respectable, aided in their operations by a poor ignorant barber. Those who are acquainted with the habits and customs of the Jews know that the slaughtering of animals is an art only permitted to those who have had regular instruction for the purpose—that no one can exercise this calling without having received a rabbinical diploma for the purpose, certifying his competency for the duty he has undertaken. Had the barber, in his frenzied replies to his



cruel interrogators, impeached one of those appointed functionaries as having been present and assisting at the murder, it might, indeed, have gone still harder with the poor Jews of Damascus, for it would have given the tale some greater degree of plausibility, and might have increased the difficulty of refuting the foul and slanderous accusation. But can it be believed that a murder should be committed by a number of persons brought together under the circumstances stated, with the conviction that such an investigation would inevitably be instituted as must make the crime recoil on the heads of those that had the temerity to perpetrate it?—or were so many persons ever engaged in a similar affair, without such a confession being elicited as should have brought home condign justice on the heads of the perpetrators? The more the story is scrutinized, the more impossible do its details appear.

It would, indeed, be too gross a waste of time to continue this line of argument, were it not known how prone the minds of the ignorant are to adopt any tale, however childish, when led on by those in whom they may repose too blind a confidence, and directed against persons respecting whom they entertain the strongest prejudice. We have before us the astounding fact of the representative of a European power\* leading on the fanatic population of Damascus to engage in the most horrible scenes, and to enter on an indiscriminate attack on the Jewish population of that city. Still more surprising does it

\* M. Ratti Menton.



appear, that, of the other European functionaries at Damascus, one only should have attempted to curb the force of this outbreak of fanaticism, and to moderate the bigotted and mistaken zeal of the French Consul, and those who were animated by his example. How great is the power of religious prejudice! The honourable exception in the cause of suffering humanity appears to have been the Consul of Austria. He interposed his protecting arm to save the Jew, Piecciotto, a man of character and station. His father having been Austrian Consul-General at Aleppo, he claimed Austrian protection, and by the interference of M. Merlato, Consul of Austria, he was saved from the dreadful torments inflicted on his less fortunate, but equally innocent brethren.

It may be here proper to remark, that Mr. Pieritz has distinctly stated, that although he urged the English Consul at Damascus to interfere on behalf of the poor suffering Jews, and restrain the pious zeal of M. Ratti Menton, the Consul of France, he could not prevail on him to do so. In contrast with this, it is gratifying to dwell on the conduct of the English Consul-General at Alexandria. Assured that his government and the British people would not withhold their sympathy for any class of persons bowed to the dust by a grievous and fanatical persecution, Col. Hodges was foremost in inviting the representatives of the other European powers to join him in his endeavour to stay the ruthless hand of the destroyer, and to save the remnant of the Lord's people from the cruelties so bountifully heaped on their devoted heads. Joined with the



representatives of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, he invited the co-operation of the Consul-General of France in a representation of the disgraceful scenes at Damascus, and to demand conduct more in harmony with the spirit of the age. Here, again, he found no fellow-labourer in the cause of humanity ; and the appeal made to the ruler of Egypt, on behalf of the oppressed, calumniated, and tortured Hebrews of Syria, lacked the Christian support of free and enlightened France. How inconsistent are the ways of man ! In France, the Jew is placed by the law on a footing of perfect civil and religious equality with all his fellow-subjects. Honours and privileges are the joint property of Jew and Christian, all equally children of France. But on the other side of the Mediterranean, French humanity does not drop a tear over *tortured, mangled, dying man*, if he belongs to the abhorred family of the despised Israelite. The eye sees not, the ear hears not, the hand feels not, aye, it even strikes the fallen victim, provided he has assumed the odious shape and name of Hebrew. Such has been the almost incredible conduct of persons entrusted with the maintenance of the honour and character of the high-minded and chivalric French people ; such, unfortunately, are the deep-rooted prejudices of men entrusted with the important duty of setting an example of moderation to barbarous nations, of weaning them from ferocious habits, and of inducing them to follow in the track of Christianity and civilization !

There are some details stated in Mr. Pieritz's Narrative which should now be alluded to ; for to those who know



the religious customs of the Jews, they bear the most conclusive evidence of the entire innocence of all the accused, and prove that they had no knowledge of the disappearance of the monk, or his servant. In the first place, when the rumour had gone forth that suspicion of this murder had been thrown on the Jews, in consequence of its having been reported that the friar had been last seen in the Jews' quarter, the Jews were assembled in their synagogues, and an excommunication decreed against any one belonging to the congregation, who did not reveal all he might know concerning the suspected murder. So solemn and unusual an act would surely have produced the desired effect, had any Jew been engaged in the murder of the friar. The penalty of excommunication is an extreme measure, never resorted to, except in cases of the most pressing emergency; and amidst an ignorant and superstitious population, would have elicited the desired information, in case any Jew had been privy to the disappearance of Padre Thomaso, or of his servant. The determination to use the whole influence of the ecclesiastical authority, in the hope of eliciting information, shews the anxiety of the Jews to do all in their power to discover the offenders, in case any such belonged to their community, and should also be decisive of the falsity of the whole charge, unless those who maintain the truth of the calumny believe that all the collateral proceedings were necessary to the concealment of the horrible practice imputed to the Jews. After the ceremony of the excommunication had taken place, an individual Jew, a seller of tobacco, came forward, and deposed to having seen the friar and his servant out-



side the city of Damascus on the afternoon of his disappearance. For this declaration he was severely beaten, by order of the Pasha, to induce further confession:—HE DIED UNDER THE INFLICTION OF THE SCOURGE.

The next case, that of an individual denounced as having been present at the murder, is also worthy of attention. This person had lost a daughter four days before the disappearance of Padre Thomaso. It is a strict custom amongst the Jews to keep the first seven days after the decease of a near relative as the seven days of mourning. During this period the mourner neither leaves his house, nor engages in any of his ordinary occupations; and, indeed, according to the Rabbinical law, he is so far presumed to be absorbed in grief, as to be excused from many religious observances which, on other occasions, are enforced with the utmost rigour. The burial of the dead, and the consolation of the mourner, are, in the Jewish Church, considered as religious obligations, and societies are instituted to take charge of this duty, which includes an attendance at the mourner's house during the week of mourning, to read prayers morning and evening, and in some countries to prepare food for the family of the mourner. Whilst the mourner remains within doors, his friends call on him to console him, to cheer his mind, and to endeavour to withdraw him from dwelling too much on the misfortune with which it may have pleased the Almighty to afflict him. Notwithstanding this well-known religious custom, which in all parts of the world is most strictly adhered to, an individual was



accused, brought before the tribunal, and cruelly tortured, although it was notorious that he was within his own house, keeping the days of mourning\*. The case of the Austrian Jew, before referred to, Piecciotto, is also a strong instance of the insecurity of life where depositions are extracted by the means of torture. Piecciotto was named in the maddened replies of one of the wretched individuals under torture as having been present at this simulated murder. He happened to have spent the evening in company with several persons, by whose testimony, and the determined conduct of the Austrian Consul, he was saved from atrocities which other less fortunate, but equally innocent individuals, were compelled to bear.

Whence arises the charge, that the Jews use human blood as an element in any part of their religious observances? This calumnious imputation can only have been suggested by the conduct which, in the olden time, was pursued against the Jews. They were oppressed—treated as enemies; and, since men are apt to conceive a strong dislike to those whom they are conscious of having injured, they become disposed to think all manner of evil of them, without any other reason for doing so than prejudice. The *anti-christian* treatment of Jews by Christians probably first suggested to the latter the idea that the Jews were capable of committing the grossest enormities. We live, however, in happier times. Wherever civilization has shed its benign influence over European society, feelings

\* Vide Narrative.



approaching nearer to those which are usually understood as Christian, prevail, in a greater or less degree, amongst all men; exhibiting the pleasing fact that, as the mind becomes enlightened by education, so do those prejudices disappear which could only have existed amidst the gross darkness of ignorance.

Is it credible that any number of human beings should deliberately engage in a cruel murder, for no other purpose than to feed on the blood of the victim? Such conduct cannot be possible in any one having the least claim to be considered human. Does such a dreadful practice exist even amongst nations reputed as the most savage and unrestrained? According to our usual notions of Anthropophagi, man is devoured for animal gratification; a taste for human flesh prevails, and the Cannibal gratifies his palate by feasting on the human victim. Does the accusation brought against the oppressed Jew of Damascus admit for him so abominable and loathsome an apology? No, even that is denied him. He dispatches his victim, not for the enjoyment of his appetite—not to indulge his palate—not to satiate his horrid lust by feasting on human flesh—but to feed his implacable revenge, and to whet his deadly hatred against the authors of those degradations which he is otherwise unable to retaliate! The Cannibal craves for human food to indulge his savage hunger. The Jew seeks not to quiet the appetite of the body, but to gratify the dire revenge of the mind, by revelling in the blood of his Christian



oppressor. Such must be the opinion of those that dare to assert the truth of so foul and horrible a charge. Little do they, who can harbour a suspicion like this, know of the religious feelings of the Jewish people. That the Jew should not cherish a kindly spirit towards his oppressor, might reasonably be believed: but whenever any hostile feeling may have existed, he has not attempted to allay it by a secret, fanatic, and hellish revenge; transgressing those scriptural commands which he feels it his duty to cherish and obey. On the contrary, he exercises a firm reliance on the wisdom and justice of the Creator towards his chosen people, who are believed to be the objects of his displeasure, and doomed by the Divine will to wander in exile, dispersed throughout the world as a punishment for their disobedience, until that day when it shall please him to gather the scattered tribes of Israel, and to re-establish the kingdom at Jerusalem. Such is the firm belief of the religious Jew—such is the spirit in which he has endured all the oppression and insult which ignorance, impiety, and fanaticism, have heaped upon him for so many centuries. With what satisfaction may we not turn from the painful scenes and harrowing details related in the narrative of Mr. Pieritz, to contemplate the progress of civilization, and observe the efforts made in this country to stay the hand of the destroyer, and to relieve the sufferers from the fangs of oppression! The conduct pursued by all classes forcibly recalls the lines of the poet—



O place me in some heaven-protected isle,  
 Where peace, and equity, and freedom, smile ;  
 Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,  
 No crested warrior dips his plume in blood ;  
 Where power secures what industry has won,  
 Where to succeed, is not to be undone.  
 A cause that distant tyrants hate in vain,  
 In Britain's Isle, beneath *VICTORIA'S* reign.

*Cowper's Heroism.*

The Jews were the persons most interested in disproving the vile calumny invented at Damascus. Shocked and astounded by the distressing intelligence of this new persecution in a remote quarter of the world—a persecution founded on an imputation which, if true at Damascus, must be true every where—the Jews of Great Britain would not separate themselves in any manner from the charge made against their unfortunate brethren. They took the initiative in throwing down the gauntlet to vindicate the Jews of Syria from the foul aspersion attempted to be cast upon that portion of their co-religionists, and to defy the malevolence of those who dared to reiterate the monkish accusation of ancient days, by bringing forward a charge that never had any other existence, except in the bigotry of those who originally invented it. The British people, with true religious feeling, have also nobly identified themselves with the sufferings of God's ancient people, and united themselves with their brethren and fellow-subjects the Jews of Britain, making common cause with them to repudiate charges at which human nature shudders. What! in these times—in the eighteen hundred and forty-first year of the Christian era—shall



it be necessary seriously to disprove the horrible charge that the Christian's elder brother imbrues his hands in human blood! Is there any command more strongly inculcated throughout Scripture, and more particularly in that portion of it which the Jew claims as peculiarly his own, than abstinence from the use of blood? "YE SHALL EAT NO MANNER OF BLOOD!" is a precept cherished by the Jew as one of the leading obligations of his religion. Whatever may have been the object of the Creator in dwelling on this prohibition, it is a command often repeated throughout that portion of Scripture which both Jew and Gentile acknowledge as most sacred. It may have been that the Divine Creator desired his people to abstain from the use of blood, with a view to produce a horror of the practices of surrounding nations, who probably indulged in the horrid practice of eating the still reeking members of the half-killed but mangled animal. It may also be conceived that feeding on blood may make mankind ferocious and cruel. But it is only necessary for each man to consult his own feelings, to be aware how contrary to human nature it is, to use blood as an ingredient of food. The notion of drinking blood is abhorrent to man, and the Divine command was probably intended to give still greater effect to those kindly feelings which it has pleased him to implant in our bosoms. The Scriptures are full of denunciations against the shedding of blood. It was one of the first injunctions in the earliest ages of the world. When Lord delivered to Noah and his sons dominion over the animal creation, we find the great principle of abstinence from the use of blood emphatically stated:—"BUT



FLESH, WITH THE LIFE THEREOF, WHICH IS THE BLOOD THEREOF, SHALL YE NOT EAT. AND SURELY YOUR BLOOD OF YOUR LIVES WILL I REQUIRE ; AT THE HAND OF EVERY BEAST WILL I REQUIRE IT, AND AT THE HAND OF MAN ; AT THE HAND OF EVERY MAN'S BROTHER WILL I REQUIRE THE LIFE OF MAN. WHOSO SHEDDETH MAN'S BLOOD, BY MAN SHALL HIS BLOOD BE SHED : FOR IN THE IMAGE OF GOD MADE HE MAN\*."

The Decalogue, which forms the strong link in the Scriptural chain which unites all mankind as members of the same family—this solemn bond of union between man and his fellow, so universal in its principles, so emphatic yet so simple in its language, as never to be listened to, whether in church or synagogue, without the strongest emotions of respect and reverence—is confined to no sect, limited to no faith, but is accepted by all who acknowledge the principles of revealed religion. The universal command, "Thou shalt do no murder," it is pretended, is to be considered by the Jew as a thing of nought, although forming a portion of those solemn injunctions given by the Creator himself to his people, with all the awful demonstration of the Divine presence, which could enforce his earliest and most impressive commands, after he had redeemed the children of Israel from a land of bondage.

The strict injunction against the use of blood in food, is ever regarded as one of the highest importance, by those

\* Genesis, ch. ix. 4, 5, 6.



who adhere to the principles of the Jewish religion. Were it possible to imagine for a moment that the Jew could be so lost to every feeling of nature, as to engage in a murder for the attainment of any ordinary purpose whatever, it may be safely asserted that, dependent as the Jews are entirely on their religious teachers, it would be an entire violation of all their principles to interfere in any matter connected with religious objects, without the express direction of their rabbinical authorities. The remark, therefore, lightly made, that superstitious fanatical Jews may, in a spirit of Eastern bigotry, do what other persons of the same faith, but not imbued with similar sentiments would hesitate to commit, is quite fallacious. A total ignorance of the nature and structure of the Jewish religion is exhibited by those who make this observation. The Jew receives from his priest, or rabbi, the exposition of the principles which should regulate his moral and religious conduct. The rabbi himself has no authority except to administer the law as it is written ; he has no power to make any change either in the oral or traditional law ; neither can he introduce any new construction, by which the defined rule of religious conformity may be undermined. There does not exist in the Jewish polity any acknowledged right of private judgment in religious affairs. The true believer receives the written dogma of the clerical authorities as his infallible and unerring spiritual rule, which all who conform must be prepared implicitly to obey. Since, therefore, the use of blood is prohibited by the law, all the care of the rabbi has been directed to prevent,



by minute restrictions, the possible intrusion of the smallest particle of blood into any kind or description of food; and this practice prevails wherever the Jewish code is in operation. The ecclesiastical precautions always adopted to insure the purity of the Passover diet, and that it shall be composed of the best and simplest materials, are conducted with the severest scrutiny, in obedience to a written code, and are extremely minute and rigorous. The Passover food consists of a mixture of the finest flour with the purest water, to form biscuit or unleavened bread, and it is eaten in reference to the Divine command, to observe the Passover in commemoration of the deliverance from the land of Egypt\*. It may perhaps be thought by some an insult to the intelligence of the British nation, and an offence to the civilization of the age, at the present time to defend the religion of the Jews from an imputation which, in darker periods of history, was brought against both Jew and Christian. It nevertheless appears advisable not to neglect the accusation, but to watch anxiously whether the horrible and malevolent calumny makes any further progress†. Although the occurrences which have caused such a painful sensation have taken place in a distant region, the persons accused belong to a community found in every district of

\* Exodus, chap. xii. 15.

† A charge similar to that of Damascus was brought against the Jews of Rhodes, and was to be investigated at Constantinople, the Pasha of Rhodes having been ordered to attend there. The Jews in this case also had been tortured and otherwise cruelly treated, and it is reported that the result of this inquiry has been the entire acquittal of the accused.



Europe, and in every country throughout the world. The missing individuals, who are reputed to have been murdered by the Jews, are also likely to interest the religious sympathies of a very considerable class of persons, whose mistaken zeal, once excited by a desire to retaliate, might lead them to encourage a spirit of religious animosity similar to that of those dark periods when ignorance, bigotry, and superstition, reigned triumphant.

It may be useful to refer to the early ages of the Church in order to produce some instances of charges similar to those brought against the Jews of Damascus. The accusation of making human sacrifices, and of using human blood, was brought by the Romans against the early Christians. In the early ages of Christianity, the Jews and Christians were often confounded by the Roman governors of the provinces, both religions being equally opposed to the Polytheism of the Heathens. Many Christians, although believers in the divine mission of Christ, were often classed with the Jews, since they still adhered, in various external matters, to the Jewish ceremonies. The utmost efforts of the Emperors, to the time of Constantine, were directed to the suppression of the Christian religion, and the extirpation of those who openly or secretly professed it. The most extraordinary reports were circulated of the cruelties practised by the Christians at their secret religious meetings.

The following examples of the early persecution of the Christians, charged with crimes similar to those under which the Jews now labour, may, perhaps, be interesting :—



During the reign of Nero, the cruelties were of a nature to exceed belief; and were they not so well authenticated, they would be classed amongst the romances of ancient days. We read of the Christians being covered with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified, and others, having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set up as lights in the night-time, and thus burnt to death\*.

In the reign of Trajan, Pliny, who was governor of Bithynia and Pontus, applied the torture to two female Christian slaves, in order to get them, if possible, to confess to the truth of the vulgar reports respecting the horrible purposes for which the Christians were said to assemble together; among which were their reputed cannibal meals, or "Thyestean banquets," as they were called, from the classic story of Thyestes.

In the persecution which took place in Asia Minor against the Christians, in the year 167, they were accused of "holding impious nocturnal ceremonies, in order to bewitch people; of immolating human beings, and offering up their blood; and of practising magic."

In the year 177, during the persecutions at Lyons and Vienne, the Roman lieutenant endeavoured to force Christians, by the torture, to confess the horrid practices with which they they were commonly charged by the Pagans. Some heathen slaves, under dread of torture,

\* Annals of Tacitus.



declared their Christian masters guilty of the crimes alleged; fanaticism received the testimony as true, and neither sex nor age was spared \*.

It was rumoured and believed that the religious meetings of the faithful were polluted by alternate excesses of superstition and debauchery: the mysteries especially were invested with the most revolting character; the Eucharist was said to be celebrated by the sacrifice of an infant; and the feast of Charity was represented to be a festival of cannibals †.

During the reign of Antoninus Pius, 138 to 161, A. D., it became common to attribute national calamities of every description to the contempt of the national religion exhibited by the Christians. Tertullian says, "If the Tiber has overflowed its banks, or the Nile has not overflowed; if Heaven has refused its rain, if the earth has been shaken; if famine or plague has spread its ravages, the cry is immediately raised—away with the Christians to the lions ‡."

It is also remarkable that Tertullian had to defend the Christians against the charge of murdering infants which the Romans imputed to them; and he defends the Christians *by a reference to the prohibitions of Scripture against the eating of blood.*

\* The History of the Christian Religion and Church during the first Three Centuries. By Dr. Augustus Neander.

† Justin Martyr, Apol. 1.

‡ Tertull. Apol. cap. 40.



It therefore appears that the Christians were the first victims of this persecution of blood: in later times the calumny was transferred to the Jews, and instances of their sufferings from this charge do not require to be introduced, for the facts must be familiar to every reader of history.

In what does the fate of a Jew, born in Britain, differ from one born at Damascus, or any other place where the descendants of the ancient people are still objects of the bitterest persecution? In nothing, except being the subject of a free instead of a barbarous state. That constitutes the whole distinction. But what a privilege is it to be the subject of a free instead of a despotic government! To know that true liberty is guarded by constitutional restraints, and that licentiousness of every kind is sure to receive merited punishment from the strong arm of the law, which regulates the position of every member of society, without distinction of colour or creed. Are such advantages to be considered as nought? Is such a condition of society no blessing? The reply is obvious. Yet are we too apt to forget those social benefits which are afforded by a well-regulated system of government, founded on the principles of freedom, both civil and religious. It is occasionally necessary to be reminded of the miserable effects of ignorance, fanaticism, and despotism, to make us the more value the blessings enjoyed by every one born on British soil. A condition of society such as is developed by the events at Damascus, is repugnant to the best feelings of our nature. Yet Europe was



once plunged in similar darkness, and not long since was it the scene of practices equally abhorrent? Stimulated by religious hatred, and urged on by a base cupidity, the Christian, even in this now free and happy country, made the Jews the unfortunate victims of the most dreadful cruelty. They were persecuted, plundered, and even massacred, without mercy, and finally driven out, to find a country and a home where they would again be subject to a repetition of similar outrages. In their zealous hatred of the Israelite, it seemed to have been entirely forgotten that the Christians themselves had been objects of the bitterest persecution; and not to multiply instances, two have been selected from Neander's History of the Church. He states that:—

“ It was certainly the intention of the Emperor Decius *entirely to crush Christianity*. He ordered (A. D. 250) strict inquiry to be made about all persons suspected of non-observance of the state religion — and Christians were to be required to comply with the ceremonies of the Roman state-religion. If they refused, threats, and afterwards tortures, were to be made use of, to induce them to give in. If they stood steadfast in the faith, then, especially against the bishops, whom the emperor hated the most, sentence of death was pronounced: but the intention was at first to try how far they could succeed with the Christians by commands, by threats, by persuasion, and light punishments; they proceeded gradually to more severe measures, and the persecution gradually extended itself into the provinces from the metropolis, where the presence of the emperor, a declared enemy of the Christians, made the per-



secution at first the most severe. Whenever the edict of the emperor was carried into execution, the first step was publicly to appoint a day, before which all the Christians of any place were to appear before the magistrate, abjure their religion, and offer sacrifice. Those who fled their country before this day, escaped with the confiscation of their property, and a prohibition of their return, under the penalty of death."

"In the year 304, during the reign of Diocletian, an edict to the following effect was posted up:—'The assemblies of the Christians for divine service shall be forbidden, the Christian churches pulled down, and all copies of the Bible burnt; those who have offices of honour and dignity shall lose them, unless they abjure. In the judicial investigations, the torture may be applied against all Christians, of any rank whatsoever, and the Christians of lower ranks shall lose their rights as citizen; and freemen, and Christian slaves, as long as they continue Christians, shall be incapable of receiving their freedom.'"

In later times, we have unfortunately seen persecutions conducted in a similar spirit, and Christian has not hesitated to attack his brother Christian on points of non-conformity, encouraged in the belief that such conduct was acceptable to God—that his will would be accomplished by means of bloodshed and oppression. These instances of early persecution are referred to merely to exhibit to the reader the authority assumed, at various times, by man to domineer over his fellow man, and in proportion



as imperfect notions of religion prevailed among nations, so also was the desire the greatest to use the arbitrary power exercised by the Government, to compel the nonconformist either to renounce his faith, or submit to the heaviest civil penalties. If such was the condition and conduct of European nations, in times comparatively recent, we ought not so much to wonder at the occurrences at Damascus, which have so much shocked the civilized world. There, the Jews have been entirely the object of the bitterest cruelties—caused by religious hatred, and promoted by the infernal machinery of a system of torture. But there is no reason to believe that the tortures employed were those reserved only for the Jews. It would rather seem that these atrocities, under the name of law, are such as are perpetrated on all classes, and that they are descriptive of the general condition of society, under the government of the Pasha of Egypt, and most probably in all other half-civilized countries where torture is employed. Wherever this infamous engine is used, the intensity of the tortures must inevitably be regulated according to the anxiety of the judge to obtain information respecting the offence, which, in his own mind, he has predetermined can be discovered by such means.

Let it be supposed that a crime having been committed, some poor hapless individual, taken upon suspicion, is brought before the Cadi, or Pasha, as the case may be. He is probably denounced, in the presence of a concourse of persons, whose feelings becoming excited, take part either for or against the prisoner. If the imputed crime be of a nature to



awaken public horror, the culprit is exposed to taunts and menaces, which are never wanting when an enraged populace give vent to their feelings. The infuriated cries of the assembled crowd are often uttered in the presence of the judge, to the perversion of justice, the dismay of the prisoner, and to the debasement of the whole population. The prisoner being questioned, he denies the crime. The bastinado is, in the first instance, applied without effect ; it produces no confession. The first attempt having failed, what is next to be done ? Of course another application. Should this second flogging not have had its effect, and produced a confession, the culprit is either remanded or discharged. If the suspicion be strong against him, he will be brought up again, to undergo a similar course of treatment, until either his dread of further torture, or his inability to hold out any longer, induces him to satisfy the egotism of the judge by a confession of the crime—unless, indeed, the judge should now think proper to announce to the court that the prisoner is innocent of the charge imputed to him. If we suppose the judge exceedingly anxious to discover some particular act of delinquency, which it is either the policy or the desire of the ruling powers should be punished, it is quite possible, nay, extremely probable, that a vast number of innocent people may be exposed to a course of treatment similar to what the poor Jews of Damascus have so recently suffered ; for it is the settled principle of such an abominable system, that the inflicting of summary torture must increase in barbarity in proportion to the anxiety to discover an offence of magnitude. If a moderate system of torture



be applied to discover a venial offence, for which the motive for concealment may not be great, a course of increased cruelty must be resorted to, for the purpose of discovering a class of crime which it is the anxious wish of the judge to find out, and which it may also be the equally great desire of the culprit to conceal. What a horrible course of misnamed justice is such a system and such a tribunal ! What numbers of innocent persons must suffer where such infamous practices prevail ! May we not fancy the greatest ruffian acquitted by his power of endurance, while the more innocent sufferer, less able to bear corporeal pain, is led to confess crimes which his soul may abhor ? Who can be safe from being denounced, where such conduct is practised ? Whilst enduring the most dreadful anguish, interrogations are going on ; and the suffering culprit urged to confess. What matter is it to him if he, in his madness, accuse the most eminent and the most virtuous, so that he, poor prostrated victim, may gain thereby a respite from his dreadful suffering ? The answer of Felton, the assassin of the Duke of Buckingham, in the reign of Charles the First, puts the impolicy of the torture in the strongest point of view. It is related that Felton, on being threatened with torture to discover whether he had any accomplices in the murder of the Duke of Buckingham, is reported to have replied to Archbishop Laud, that in his agony he could not say whether he might not impeach any name that first presented himself to his mind, even some of those who were at that moment interrogating him, and recommended, therefore, that so hazardous an experiment should not be tried upon him.



Had the poor agonized Jews retorted the accusation on the French Consul, he would probably have found it extremely hard to have acquitted himself before such a tribunal of having been personally concerned in the very crime which it was his endeavour to fix on the unoffending merchants of Damascus. He would then have appeared before the world under the suspicion of having committed the very offence which he has sought to place on the shoulders of others, and he would have had to defend his own character from a charge extracted by torture, and which probably may have had no other foundation than the prospect of the sufferer being able to gain temporary relief from the bitterest anguish. Let us therefore hope that the light of civilization which has illumined Europe will shed its benevolent rays wherever barbarous practices still prevail. Let us hope that the intercourse between nations which has been gradually extending, and more particularly that the facilities of steam navigation, will enable the enlightened and influential, securely to traverse regions hitherto enveloped in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, and by affording specimens of the meliorating influence of education, induce even the most barbarous nations to raise the moral standard of man, by abandoning cruel practices, and introducing principles of government based on the sacred foundation of charity, mercy, forbearance, and justice.

Whatever religious sentiments may be professed by individuals, to whatever community they may belong, no reading or thinking man can deny the benefits which the



Reformation has afforded to the civilized world. That great religious movement emancipated the human mind from the trammels of bigotry, and introduced those higher principles of individual responsibility so necessary to ensure the good conduct of each member of society. The principle of civil and religious liberty acknowledged at the Reformation, must for ever prevent the recurrence of a period similar to that in which Europe was involved during the middle ages. The inestimable blessing which it has conferred on society will not be limited to a fraction of the human race. Nations now under barbarian rule are feeling its influence, and gradually emerging from the darkness in which they are enveloped. The early Reformers, engaged in a struggle for existence, were unable to disseminate widely those principles which have since taken such deep root in every part of the civilized world : their great efforts were limited to opposition to the influence of the Church of Rome, which had such fast hold on the minds of the people. The sacred cause involved in their secession was afterwards clouded over by acts utterly inconsistent with the principles of religious freedom which they desired to establish. Mankind being pressed forward by the new movement, it might have been supposed that the Jew would not have lagged behind in the march of improvement. But he had every where to encounter that mass of prejudice which, accumulating as it had been for centuries, could not be expected to subside except through the wasting power of passing years. The Reformation had been ratified by European nations, who had adopted it as their ruling principle, both social and



spiritual ; yet how little progress was the Jew permitted to make until the commencement of the present century, even where the principles of civil and religious liberty were best understood. In those countries in which he was not overwhelmed by the most grievous oppression, he was merely tolerated and regarded as a stranger in the land, having neither home, country, nor possession.

Let us survey the condition of the English people, and we shall find them engaged in a lengthened struggle to maintain Protestant ascendancy, which was threatened for many years. During the life of the exiled descendants of the House of Stuart, the nation was too much occupied to attend to the affairs of those who were supposed to have no vested right in the soil, and who might at any moment transfer their allegiance and their effects to any country that offered them some fleeting advantages. A contest between the large mass of Dissenters and the members of the Church was subsequently carried on, in reference to the question of an equality of civil privileges. The English and Irish Catholics were afterwards engaged in a similar contest, until this struggle terminated in their admission to the full enjoyment of the benefits of the constitution, and completed the measure of justice for all that had by penal enactments been deprived of the rights of conscience. Far better would it have been to have provided for every Dissenter from the church by a general law, instead of the piece-meal legislation which reduced the concession to the narrowest limits, and deprived the boon of much of its grace. Had such a principle been adopted, the British



Jew would have been embraced within the wide circle, and would not have had still to appear as a humble suppliant for a modification of laws which affecting his social position, leave him amongst his fellow subjects as one marked with the stigma of disability. It seems strange that oaths, introduced under other circumstances, with a view to curb other classes, should remain against the Jew, whilst the sects against whom they were specially directed have been exempted from their stringent operation by such a modification of the law as shall have released those against whom these enactments were originally framed.

But to return to the main subject. The principles of religious freedom, which were elicited during this struggle, were not lost on the Jews: they silently watched these proceedings, and fully entered into the spirit of those who were engaged in them. But unhappily the means of education were wanting. Shut out from the public schools by prejudice, and from the universities by tests, they had to struggle intensely for even the mere elementary branches of education. Their mother tongue in many instances taught by foreigners, it was not surprising that their very native language had a strong taint of its external origin. It was only since strong prejudice had moderated, that some of the more enlightened persons of that religion sent their children to public schools, where they had to encounter no small share of ridicule, arising out of some of their real or supposed peculiarities and religious antipathies. The light of education, once kindled in a narrow circle, soon extended itself; and with the spread of intelligence



amongst the Jews, has the spirit of conciliation been diffused, and confidence in their character and conduct disseminated amongst all classes of society. The Jew is no longer viewed as an untameable, hateful being. He is received as a fellow subject, equally English with his neighbour, partaking in his sympathies, sharing his joys and mitigating his sorrow, uniting allegiance with him, and equally ready to defend his native soil from the assault of internal or external enemies. This growing feeling of confidence has excited an ardent desire for the social and moral improvement of all classes of the community. Amongst no portion of society has the importance of education become more apparent than in the marked progress of the mental condition of the Jews since the commencement of the present century, more particularly in this country.

Let the position of the Jew on the continent of Europe be surveyed, and see the vexations to which he was, and probably still is, exposed in consequence of his conscientious adherence to the religion of his ancestors. Is it to be believed that the educated Jew contemplates with less mortification than other classes his exclusion from the civil and religious privileges which form the vested right of every other individual? If the exercise of civil rights be gratifying to every freeman, how heavy is the punishment which, in many European States, it has been the policy for ages to inflict on the Jews! On the one hand the Jew is charged with want of sympathy with his fellow subjects, arising from his peculiar habits, which separate him from



the rest of the world. On the other hand, the means by which he might be made to approximate are carefully placed beyond his reach. In some countries he is still shut up in an obscure corner of the town in which he may happen to reside, entirely neglected by the local authorities, provided he is prepared to contribute his quota of taxes, or personal service. Compelled to take his share of the burden of the social state, he is nevertheless debarred the enjoyment of those privileges or advantages which are the objects of honourable ambition in all civilized communities. But this is not all ; in many states of Europe he lately was, or perhaps still is, obliged to wear an external badge, that he might be recognised and known as a Jew when passing through all public thoroughfares, thereby marked out to his fellow citizens as an object of contempt, and giving also a refinement of cruelty to the lowest system of degradation that man ever conceived for the debasement of his fellow man. But this was not all ! He could not go from one town to another without being subject to an odious impost ; in fact, he was unable to leave his own town without paying the Jews' tax ; neither could he gain admittance into any other without paying a similar toll. Prohibited from enjoying the common privilege of man, he was debased to the level of a beast, his name being placed on the Tariff board of the city gates amongst the animals of the brute creation, all objects of taxation like himself, every other human creature being exempted from this infamous charge on locomotion. Such, it is to be feared, is yet the condition of the Jew in many civilized and Christian States ; and can it be wondered at, that a portion of our fellow creatures, objects



of such degradation, should be not only hated, but thought capable of committing the most revolting enormity? The extraordinary and mysterious property of the human mind, which incites mankind to feel an aversion against those whom they injure, is fully exemplified in the treatment of the humiliated Israelite. See him, as above described — moving on the face of the earth hardly tolerated by his neighbours, dragging on a life of degradation—compelled by his fellow-men to bear upon his person the emblem of persecution—marked, like Cain, with an infamous badge, except that the brand of obloquy is more strikingly exhibited than the sign of protection—and can it be a matter of wonder that he was suspected of conduct equally hateful with that which was so undeservedly and unmercifully exhibited towards him? Degraded because he was oppressed, and despised because he was degraded, is it surprising that the oppressor thought that the Jew would not scruple to commit any possible crime? There is sufficient in prejudice—common every-day prejudice, arising out of the ordinary circumstances and business of life, to induce man to believe his neighbour capable, and therefore desirous, of wronging him. But when to this feeling are added, those strong emotions which arise from preconceived ideas, either of religious or national antipathy, it cannot be a subject of wonder that the belief should prevail that the Jew did actually and daily practise every conceivable enormity. He was, perhaps, the victim of these unjust impressions in the greatest possible degree. By many considered as a wanderer on the face of the



earth, without home or country—by the religious world looked on as the object of God's wrath, and suffering punishment for disobedience to his solemn injunctions—lying under the imputation of being a descendent of those who brought Jesus Christ before the civil tribunal, and derided his sufferings, the feelings of the bigotted vulgar were enlisted against him. All were ever prepared to mortify him who had no defenders, and the desire to revenge their Saviour's death was exhibited by the persecution of the unfortunate Jew, whilst they forgot that such conduct was contrary to all those injunctions which the good Christian regards as the sacred rule of his moral, social, and religious conduct. It would indeed seem as if the turpitude of Judas was alone remembered by the ignorant and the illiterate, whilst the virtue of the remaining disciples, equally Hebrew with the fallen one, was entirely overlooked. How could the Jew retaliate? Sunk in the lowest depth of social degradation, he only dragged on his existence in the religious belief that he also was fulfilling his destiny, and that a time would come when he too would have his triumph, and in his turn be relieved from the indignities which the Divine will had doomed that he should for a time patiently suffer.

It is impossible to contemplate the unhappy persecution of the Jews at Damascus, without entering somewhat at length into the principles that may have influenced those who took a lead in this infamous proceeding. Perhaps it is fortunate that Christians *did* so largely engage in



those cruelties, since this circumstance has forcibly brought under the notice of the religious world the debasing character of ignorance and superstition, under whatever form they may appear. The exhibition of this rife outbreak of credulity and prejudice forcibly carries us back to the period when, in all countries, similar scenes were enacted, at a time when the like causes were in operation. The atrocities which have so disgusted the British people, should therefore not be regarded as mere isolated events, unconnected with the principles and causes which have produced them: but they should present to our minds the undoubted truth, that neither life, person, nor property, can be safe, except where the human race has been thoroughly civilized by the means of education.

The barbarous system of the Syrian government has impelled it, on the present occasion, to shower its iniquities on the unfortunate Jews. Might they not, however, have fallen on Christians? A few fleeting years have scarcely passed since Christians were equally exposed to the savage and brutal machinery set in motion against the Jews, and now directed by Christian hands. The care and protection afforded by the European powers, have placed the Christian, under the Turkish and Egyptian dominion, on a footing of security, at least as far as life and limb are concerned. Force being the only weapon of government, it is also the only law which the barbarian despot will acknowledge. This power, exerted for the Christian, has improved his civil condition. Oh! that his religious state could have been equally ameliorated, his mind enlarged by education,



and his heart opened to the kinder and more soothing influence of the faith which he professes to adopt as the rule of his worldly conduct ! What an example has the scene at Damascus presented to the haughty and imperious Moslem ! The representative of a European power leading on the Christian population in a cruel attack on the helpless Israelite ! The Christian, hardly himself relieved from the iron arm of power, giving way to his fanaticism, and directing the whole weight of despotic authority to fall on the devoted head of the less fortunate, because less protected, Hebrew. Witness the extraordinary spectacle of the protector of the Christian promoting a crusade against the already beaten down and injured Jew,—the defender of the one, being the oppressor of the other ! With what profound contempt must the Mussulman have viewed the whole scene ! What religious sympathy has he with the Christian more than with the Jew ; both equally inimical to his faith, both equally opposed to its precepts. The Eastern origin of the Israelite should rather incline him to sympathize with the original possessor of the land which heaven has assigned to the grasp of his iron hand ; but it is the principle of despotic power, not sympathy, which furnishes him with the rule of conduct, and he implicitly follows its impulse in his intercourse with all who are placed within the reach of his arbitrary command. The Christian has those who carefully watch his position, whilst the Jew, desolate and without friends, is less able to soften the stern system of African or Asiatic rigour, the effects of which he formerly divided with his Christian neighbour. The unfortunate Hebrew may cry, but none come forward to save him ;—



no staying hand to rescue, he is bowed to the earth, until fatigue arrests the arm of the destroyer, and contempt, not pity, suggests to the despot that another occasion will surely present itself, when he may more satisfactorily finish what he has so disgracefully begun.

Alas! these scenes present to us only a revived specimen of what has occurred in past times. Such doings were enacted in days of yore in every state of Europe; civil despotism and religious prejudice have desolated every land. Examples of the persecution of the Christians by the Heathen have been already produced. The annals of history are full of instances of the soothing precepts of Christianity being overlooked, and of texts of Scripture being only sought for by which those in power might be justified in forcing their fellow Christians to conform, or to expiate the sin of heresy by a horrid and lingering death. The persecutions inflicted on the Protestants by the Romanists, and by Non-Conformists on each other, excite the wonder of mankind. The instances of the burning of Huss, at Constance, and that of Servetus, at Geneva, are specimens of the mischievous effects of misdirected zeal, and of the absence of religious charity. That men should have perverted the mild spirit of the Gospel to so base a purpose, and have invoked the sacred name of religion whilst murdering innocent victims, may be reckoned among the wayward actions of that most strange and inconsistent animal, man! What has not the civilized world seen enacted even in our own now eminently civilized, humane, and free country! Humanity shudders to look back to



the earlier days of Britain, when persecutions, which bear a resemblance to those of Damascus, prevailed, for the purpose of extorting money from the Jew, or conformity from the Christian. How debasing must be the tendency of ignorance and arbitrary power, when conduct so opposed to all the sacred precepts of religion was practised without remorse ! Such principles made the people brutal, discontented, and wretched : an opposite course has made the nation happy at home, and respected abroad. Let education, liberty, and civilization, flourish in other countries, and, in them, person and property will be equally safe.

The low position held by the Jew in civilized Christian nations, has already been adverted to in these pages. The more we contemplate this fact, the more shall we be shocked at the wretched policy which has thus degraded him in the social scale. Can it be necessary to the truth of Christianity, that a portion of God's creatures should be abased and held up to the contempt of their fellow men ? Presuming that the Creator has decreed a punishment on a portion of the human race, should it not be the duty of man to mitigate, not to aggravate, their fate ? The precepts of the Almighty ever point towards charity and mercy, and in no part of the Scriptures is an authority given to man to afflict or mortify his brother man. Such conduct is expressly prohibited. Can the treatment of the Jews, for ages past, be reconciled with the principles of revealed religion, or the dictates of human nature ? Much has been said of the obstinacy of the Jew, and of the exclusiveness of his religion : but what has society done to



abate these prevailing causes of complaint and animadversion? How could the Jew raise himself in the social scale, except by the aid of the law, or the influence of education? Whose duty was it to take the lead, that of the oppressor or the oppressed? Surely it could not have been supposed that one held so cheap amongst the nations of the world, should have exerted himself to attain a position in which his social degradation would have been more deeply felt? It has been gravely stated that some of the writers of books much venerated by the Jew, instil no kindly feelings towards his Christian neighbour. How lightly is this observation made! Little have the emotions of the human heart been examined by those who make the remark. These objectors forget that love and hatred are both influenced by circumstances. The Almighty has implanted a feeling in the human breast to sympathize with distress, and to pity the unfortunate. Who has ever heard a tale of sorrow without feeling in his breast sentiments of pity?—emotions which exhibit most strongly the desire of the Creator that we should be kind to our brother man, and relieve his misfortunes. The human heart may again be appealed to in confirmation of the fact, that emotions the contrary of these are sure to be elicited by acts of cruelty and oppression. When man is exposed to these evil influences, the principles of religion happily interfere to restrain the passions, to subdue the impulse of hatred, and to prevent the rising spirit of revenge, which would otherwise direct the human mind. It is a part of the duty of religion to inculcate amongst men the love of mankind. This precept is universal, but the Jew has always been specially excepted from its



blessed influence. Persecuted, degraded, and despised, it is brought against the Jew that he is suspected of not viewing his Christian fellow man in that sweet and blessed spirit of kindness and charity that should prevail amongst all the members of the human family. Whence is the reciprocal feeling of regard to have arisen? Where was it cultivated? How promoted? As well might we expect a bountiful crop of the most delicate grain from the hardened surface of the turnpike road. The well-tilled field, and the macadamized road, formed originally a portion of the soil to be appropriated to their several purposes. Each has been devoted to its separate use. The labour of man, in both instances, has prepared and fitted the ground for the purpose which his wants dictated. The surface of the one, required for seed, has, by the efforts of man, been worked and prepared, so that it shall in due season return to him the fruits of his labour. The other, covered with stone, and hardened by his exertion, was equally fitted by him for its distinct and peculiar purpose. The well-ploughed field was as unsuited to the rough wear of the grinding load, as the hardness of the road itself was inapplicable to the use and wants of the industrious husbandman. This humble comparison may in some measure describe the position of the Jew in connexion with the rest of society. Mankind may be compared to the tillage-land, every where prepared and ready to repay the genial influences which the care of man may have directed towards it. The hardened surface of the macadamized road would well describe the effect of the policy of man towards the unfortunate Jew, every where exposed to bear the severe



measures which his fellow man's uncharitable aversion, or his misapplied prejudices, have inflicted upon him. Receiving no kindness, he was nowise fitted to return any. Suffering under repeated indignities, he was only prepared to endure the contumely which was so plentifully awarded him; and as no kindly disposition was exhibited towards him, so it may be presumed that he also had none to offer. Spurned by his neighbours—shunned by society, he was considered below the standard of man; and, if sympathy were indeed expected from him under such circumstances, his nature ought rather to have partaken of the divine essence of an angel than of the ordinary temperament of the members of the human family.

In submitting these reflections to his readers, it has been the desire of the writer to avoid every thing tending towards religious controversy. His object has been, briefly, and, he hopes, calmly, to review the unfortunate occurrences in Syria, and the causes that have produced them, as well as the means by which an improved feeling may be introduced into the dark region, where ignorance, bigotry, and fanaticism, now so extensively prevail. The writer's object is not to *limit* the welfare of society—not to confine his improvement to the Jews, but to extend it to the whole human race; convinced that no progress can ever be made by any portion of society, without every other being equally benefitted. It must be obvious even to the most superficial observer, that as education has spread, and the spirit of religion is better understood, so has every grade of society also progressed. It is impossible for the Jew



to be advanced in the social scale, without the people amongst whom he is placed advancing with him; and it may also be presumed, that nations cannot advance in civilization, without also carrying the Jew along with them.

Experience shows, that while nations were ignorant they indulged in persecution; and as they became educated such inhuman conduct, whether manifested towards Jew or Gentile, was equally abhorrent. Witness the efforts made and making amongst the governments of Europe to improve the penal code, and the numberless societies in existence, in this and other countries, to mitigate the sorrows of mankind. It is with a view to recal to the mind the true spirit of despotism and fanaticism, that the writer has ventured on these pages. Wherever these debasing disorders exist, their effects must be the same, and the remedies to be applied, whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa, must be of a character to meet the disease. Whatever shape injustice may assume, it should be the object of Britons to mitigate its operation, and to plead on behalf of the sufferer. But it is necessary that the eternal maxim of equal justice and toleration should not only be proclaimed, but practised, otherwise the effect will prove transitory; and, instead of a perfect cure being attained, the suffering victim will receive only a modified and temporary relief. The principle of freedom does not admit of modification; and whether persons are disfranchised by oaths, or by penalties of a more aggressive nature, is only a question of degree. It is clear that exceptional tests have this brand of injustice



broadly stamped on them, that they fall with the greatest weight on the most conscientious and uncompromising.

It should be, therefore, the duty of Englishmen to examine into all laws which encroach on the principle of immutable justice, with a view of exhibiting to the civilized world the desire to place every subject of these realms on the most favourable footing, and to draw no invidious distinction between the members of the great British family. Then will Englishmen be better enabled to exert their powerful influence, not only to vindicate the oppressed Jew of Damascus, but to promote the principle of equal, entire, and impartial, civil and religious liberty all over the world. In conclusion, the writer begs to remark that, regarding the rights and liberties of the Jews as only forming a component part of the rights and liberties of the human race in general, he confidently hopes that the events in Syria may give an impulse to the efforts of those who have ever taken a lead in the civilization of mankind. Happy will he be if he should have been able to awaken in any quarter additional interest in the grand question of human improvement, and to promote the speedy arrival of that auspicious moment when such atrocities as have lately disgraced human nature at Damascus shall become, in every part of the world, matters of past history; and when, in reading of such enormities and such vile injustice and cruelty, every inhabitant of every country shall shudder with horror on the contemplation of such miseries, and doubt whether they ever could have existed!



My fellow subjects ! your aid is invoked—your influence solicited. A new scene is opening for British humanity ; a new field is prepared for the display of those generous qualities which have thrown a halo round our sea-girt isle, and elevated its inhabitants beyond those of any other land.

Providence has thus far blessed our labours and multiplied our possessions. Secure in the enjoyment of temporal advantages, British protection is every where invoked. Let us sympathize with misfortune and relieve the sufferer—let us raise mankind in the scale of society—let us diffuse sound principles of policy and religion throughout the world—let our voice be heard and our example be set forth, for the improvement of the condition of man in every clime ;—then may we still with confidence rely on the Almighty Ruler of Heaven and Earth that he will bless all our actions ; that he will be pleased to strengthen amongst us the spirit of kindness and philanthropy ; that all nations may be united in a bond of righteousness ; and that justice and mercy may be the ruling principles of government in every part of the globe.

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## ADDENDA.

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THE annexed documents have been selected from many that have reached this country, on the subject of the recent persecution of the Jews. Some of them have already appeared in the public prints, together with other statements of considerable interest. A charge resembling that made at Damascus was also got up against the Jews of Rhodes, and is alluded to in Appendix A, and in the letter of Abulafia, Appendix E. The English Consul at Rhodes is reported as having been active in this case, in exciting the Turkish authorities against the Jews, in consequence of his belief that the Jews immolate human victims at the feast of the Passover. The gentleman alluded to is a native of the Levant, and has probably imbibed many of the superstitious notions current in that comparatively obscure part of Europe. An inquiry into this charge had been directed by the Turkish Government, and the Pasha of Rhodes was summoned to Constantinople for that purpose; and it is said that the result has been the entire acquittal of the Jews.

The papers relating to the outrages at Damascus consist of the letter from the Congregation of Constantinople to the Messrs. Rothschild, containing an appeal from the Jews of Damascus, soliciting aid; also a like appeal



from the Jews of Rhodes. A similar communication was forwarded to the Jews in the chief cities of Europe. A fragment only of this appeal is given, for most of the details have been more fully stated in Mr. Pieritz's Narrative. Mr. Pieritz's letters to the Jews of Alexandria are next given. Then a letter from Abulafia, the father of one of the sufferers. This letter, written in Hebrew, was directed to a gentleman at Amsterdam, who takes great interest in the welfare of the Eastern Jews. The letter merits attention, and is curious, from its peculiar eastern style. The powerful and convincing letter from Dr. Hirschel to Sir Moses Montefiore, concludes the collection of materials necessary to acquire a full acquaintance with all the facts connected with this extraordinary occurrence.



## APPENDIX A.

*Appeal of the Eastern Jews to their Brethren in Europe.*

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM THE ELDERS OF THE  
JEWISH CONGREGATION AT CONSTANTINOPLE, TO  
MESSRS. DE ROTHSCHILD, OF LONDON.

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RESPECTED SIRS,—Independently of the tie which so strongly binds together the whole Jewish community, of which you are distinguished ornaments, having always stood most prominently forward in assisting our distressed brethren, whose appeals to you are not unfrequent, your beneficent hearts cannot but be greatly moved to sympathize with two numerous Jewish communities,—viz. that of Damascus under the Egyptian jurisdiction, and that of Rhodes, one of the Ottoman states, oppressed by the tyrannies of the Pashas who govern them. *These persecutions have originated in calumnies which the oppressors have themselves invented, and which have been long brooding in their hearts, to the prejudice of the Jewish community. Our brethren are accused of being accomplices in murder, in order to make, with the blood of the murdered men, their Passover-cakes,—a thing in itself incredible, as being forbidden by our holy religion.* This report has, however, found credence with the govern-



ing Pashas of Damascus and Rhodes, and they have oppressed and incarcerated not only several old men and rabbins, but even a number of children, *putting them to tortures which it makes one shudder to hear*. Such is the afflicting picture drawn in the letters of our persecuted brethren, of which letters, with deep regret, we hand you copies.

The community which now addresses you is implored by the sufferers to put an end to their persecutions, and to prevent, if possible, their recurrence; but it is deeply grieved to find itself incapacitated from affording any relief, in consequence of being subject to a government not on friendly terms with the Pasha of Egypt.

There remain, therefore, no means of salvation for the oppressed, except an appeal to your innate goodness and pity. We entreat you, therefore, to interpose your valuable mediation in such manner, and with such persons, as you may deem most desirable for the safety of our unhappy brethren *languishing in chains, and in prison*, so as to obtain from the Pasha of Egypt the liberation of the Jews of Damascus, and a compensation, not only from the governing Pasha of Damascus, commensurate with the excesses committed by him, but also from the Consular agents at Rhodes, who have risen against persons not subject to them.

We, the rabbins and elders of this community, impressed with the urgency of the case, and with compassion for



our brethren, and induced by the report which is current throughout the world of the generous and philanthropic sentiments which animate you, and fill your hearts, ever open to the miseries of the oppressed, feel persuaded that you will exert yourselves to do all you can possibly accomplish in these distressing circumstances.

While we offer to you, in anticipation, our warmest thanks, we assure you that both ourselves and the oppressed will incessantly offer up to the Supreme Being our fervent prayers for the preservation and increase of your respectable family, and that he may be pleased to preserve them, to the most remote posterity, in the rank in which most worthily you at present stand.

Accept the assurance of the highest esteem with which we have the honour to be, gentlemen, your humble and devoted servants,

J. CAMONDO.

SALAMON QM. Mco. TUA.

SAMUEL DE N. TREVES.

Constantinople, March 27, 1840.



## APPENDIX B.

*Appeal of the Jews at Damascus to the Elders of the  
Congregation at Constantinople.*

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THIS document accompanied the letter in Appendix A, but as the details of sufferings were very similar to those already given in the narrative of Mr. Pieritz, it was thought desirable to omit them, to avoid unnecessary repetition. The appeal concludes thus:—

“You will judge from this, dear friends, what sort of justice is administered by means of astrology, and how such justice is administered. *And there is no one who is moved to compassion in favour of the unfortunate victims of oppression.* Even Mr. Bekor Negri, the Governor’s banker, unable to bear these afflictions, became a Mus-  
sulman.

“Read, dearest friends, this letter to Messrs. Camondo, Hatteri, and Carmonna, in order that they may do what they may deem most fitting.”



## APPENDIX C.

*Copy of a Letter addressed by Mr. Pieritz to the Jews of Alexandria after his return from Damascus, and by them forwarded to their friends in Europe.*

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(COPY.)

Alexandria, May 13, 1840.

GENTLEMEN,

It is with feelings of the deepest affliction that, as a fellow mourner over the sad fate which lately overtook our compatriots at Damascus, threatened with infamy and disgrace, and, so far as the Eastern countries are concerned, even with extirpation the remnant of our nation, I hereby furnish you with a faithful, though brief, account of the awful proceedings here referred to.

You are already aware that I have long since renounced the modern religion of Judaism, and embraced that religion which I sincerely believe to be the real inheritance of our righteous and glorious forefathers, the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, and, I may add, of Christ and his apostles of the New Testament; and not only have I embraced Christianity, but I am even supporting the character of a missionary to the Jews, honestly labour-



ing for their conversion to the same faith; and have, for the last two years, had my station in the holy city of Jerusalem.

In consequence of several baptisms of Jews within this time, and the avowed convictions of several others, of the truth of the gospel which I preach, the Rabbis of Jerusalem saw fit three times successively to launch excommunications against every Jew who should hold any intercourse with me, though none of them were enforced.

But neither this rough treatment, which I am sure proceeded from a zeal for good, but not according to knowledge, nor any difference of faith, could make me or any other faithful disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord, whether of Jewish or Gentile extraction, indifferent to your calamity.

Many so-called Christians, in ages past, have indeed deeply oppressed and injured our nation, but they were not the Hezekiahs and Josiahs, but the Jeroboams and Manassehs of the Christian Church.

When we, therefore, the members of the Mission of Jerusalem, to which I have the honour to belong, heard of the calumnious charge so often brought against our nation, especially in the thirteenth century, and even against Christians by the heathens of the first three centuries, under which the Jews at Damascus were now suffering, and saw around us the baneful effects which this report at



once produced among an ignorant bigotted population, it was immediately resolved amongst the members of our Mission, especially our worthy and reverend superintendent, Mr. John Nicolayson, that I should forthwith go to Damascus, in order, if supported by the European Consuls there, that I might give my testimony that your religion, so far from requiring murder and the use of blood, expressly forbids both; and to this fact I am prepared to repeat, in my own name, the famous oath of your illustrious Manasseh Ben Israel. Whether the Jews had committed murder or not, we could not decide at a distance; but what we wished to do was, to prevent the crime of one or some being made a national crime.

I was fixed on for this mission, as I was born a Jew, and trained up for the Rabbinical profession, and therefore best qualified for the task. As a Christian, and by no means a friend or advocate of Rabbinism, I was particularly fitted to be a witness in such a case.

I will not here describe what my feelings were when at Damascus. I found the whole charge against the Jews there a vile fabrication, that all means and right of legal defence was denied them, whilst the most cruel tortures were employed to extort from them false confessions of guilt, which some were cowards enough to make. You are now in possession of the result of my labours at Damascus, and know also what steps I am now taking in Alexandria, and intend to take in the case.



I have the honour, gentlemen, to request you hereby to forward copies of the accompanying statement I now transmit to you, which rests partly on official documents in my possession, and partly on other information which I carefully gathered on the spot, and may be relied on, to so many parts of Europe as you may think fit, calling on the wealthy and influential members of your community to exert themselves in the case.

Your great enemy in Damascus is Count Rattimenton, the French Consul at that place; but I am sure not at the command but to the disgrace of his Government. His principal coadjutor is Mr. Baudin, ex-Consular Agent for France in Damascus.

And I would here take occasion to observe, that I saw several articles in the public newspapers, representing indeed the late proceedings at Damascus as cruel, but the French Consul as a kind mediator for the Jews. I saw it even stated that orders had been received for the execution of several of the Jews, but that he postponed the catastrophe. These statements, I feel assured, must proceed from the friends of the French Consul at Damascus, and are without the least foundation of truth. It is well known to official persons, from whom I have the information, that at the very commencement of the proceedings, His Excellency Sheriff Pacha informed His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt of what was going on, and His Highness requested His Excellency the Sheriff Pacha carefully to investigate the matter, but not to give sentence in the case,



leaving that to His Highness; and His Highness never gave any orders for execution in the case.

I can, however, easily account for the French Consul or his friends wishing to deceive the public, as before stated. Signor Isaac de Piecciotto was the only European subject who was (towards the beginning of March, a month after the commencement of the trials) accused as one of the murderers of Padre Tomaso's servant; he was then immediately arrested by the local authorities. Now, had he remained in their hands, and been tried on the same principle as the others before him, the result might have been fatal to the Jews; he, indeed, referred to witnesses who could prove his innocence, but so had some of the others done too, without being regarded. Isaac de Piecciotto would either have been destroyed or reduced to self-condemnation by the raging tortures, and iniquity would have triumphed; but the Austrian Consul demanded Piecciotto, as an Austrian subject, to be tried on European principles. The French Consul now exerted his utmost to prevent Piecciotto being given up; several letters passed between the two consuls, but Signor Merlato maintained his ground, and took Piecciotto out of the hands of the Pacha; and Piecciotto's witnesses gave their conclusive evidence in proof of his innocence.

The French Consul and his friends now, therefore, looked upon their lot as cast: they trembled at the infamy with which they knew they must be loaded, and hence the dishonest attempt here referred to.



I hear now, further, on the other hand, that the French Consul charges the Jews with having offered him 4,000,000 piastres as a bribe to drop the matter. Without being able at this distance to inquire into the matter, I feel fully justified to contradict the assertion. The Jews, no doubt, would have been ready to give more than the sum stated, not because they were guilty, but because justice was not administered, and they could see no way to escape the death and tortures which were making such ravages among them ; but the French Consul would have been the last to whom they would make an offer which they were too well persuaded he would turn as a weapon against them. I am sure, if all the lions of Africa had been let loose into the Jewish quarter of Damascus, the terror would not have been greater than when the French Consul or his underlings appeared there : they, the Consul himself not excepted, paraded about in the said quarter, and when they saw a poor Jew pale and trembling at their sight, he was arrested, his fear being urged in proof of his guilt. Again, I hear through Mr. Cochelet, the French Consul-General at Alexandria, that the French Consul of Damascus offers himself to his government to undergo a trial on the spot, *i. e.* at Damascus. A trial he ought, indeed, to undergo, but Damascus must not be the court—this must be strongly protested against. The so-called Christians and Mahommedans of Damascus are an ignorant and outrageous rabble, who would kiss the French Consul's foot for what he lately did against the Jews, and would be ready to swear to any thing to defend the French Consul ; while those otherwise minded would be afraid to



come forward : and should he be declared guilty in Damascus, then the Jews would by this be the more in danger from popular fury.

I would yet only beg to explain certain allusions in the trial of Isaac de Piecciotto, in the Austrian Consulate at Damascus, March 9th, 1840, and which is not in your hands. When reports got abroad that the barber made circumstantial confessions, and some began to entertain doubts whether this barber, a poor man of mean character, might not indeed have been concerned in a crime in company with some characters of his own station of society, Piecciotto was one of those entertaining such doubts, and, at the suggestion of the Austrian Consul, went to speak with the French Consul on the subject, and to this circumstance it is that allusion is made in the trial above referred to ; but no reasonable man—no Jew—thought it possible, for one moment, that the highly-respectable merchants could be guilty.

I rejoice that all the leading Consuls-General here, Mr. Cochelet excepted, are fully alive to a sense of justice, and sympathize with you in your calamity. And I must most especially direct your most cordial thanks to Col. Hodges, H. B. M.'s Consul-General, through whom I am enabled to present my petition to His Highness Mohamed Ali on the subject ; and I have the assurance that this gallant officer, as well as his colleagues (with the exception mentioned), will do what is practicable to secure a fair trial in the case in hand. And I need not tell you how much you



owe to Mr. Laurin, Austrian Consul-General, for the energetic part he has already taken in the defence of those Austrian subjects who were implicated in the late affair.

But their encouragements ought not to relax our own exertions, they ought only to incite them: you have too much at stake, and falsehood and fraud, bigotry and prejudice, are in array against you. Much depends on the view the French government will take of the matter.

You will perhaps do well, gentlemen, to accompany the statements you will forward with the copy of this letter, which I hereby give you leave to do.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) G. W. PIERITZ,

Missionary to the Jews of Jerusalem.

To Joseph Wallheim, Esq. and friends,  
Israelites of Alexandria.

P.S.—That you may have some idea of what may be expected, I give you this extract of a letter from Damascus of April 16th:—"The trials (of the Jews) at Court proceed very slowly now, but not so the compilation of journals, at which people are very industrious;" and I may add, that as I in Damascus pointed out the contradictions, and in the enemy's own statements, new reports



were anon set on foot to evade my arguments, till a wise friend cautioned me to make no more objections now, but to leave them to a future period, when they might be of service.

G. W. P.



## APPENDIX D.

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*To Joseph Wallheim, Esq. and Friends, Israelites of  
Alexandria.*

Alexandria, 16th May, 1840.

GENTLEMEN,

I cannot help expressing to you my entire gratification at the result of my interview with H. H. the Viceroy of Egypt, which I had with H. H. yesterday, Colonel Hodges, H. B. M. Consul-General in Alexandria, having had the goodness to introduce me to him. On that occasion I presented to H. H. our Petition on the late unhappy affair at Damascus. H. H. expressed himself perfectly ready to forward the ends of justice, and to allow any qualified person, deputed by the Jews for this purpose, to plead their cause.

I may at the same time be allowed to inform you, that this day a joint note will be presented to H. H. Mahomed Ali, from the leading Consul-Generals here, (M. Cochelet, the French Consul-General, excepted); upon which, it is hoped, that H. H. will give them a firman, confirming his vocal promises. At the same time I regret to say, that the French Government has by the last post sent out instructions to Mr. M. des Meloize, an attaché to



the consulate here, forthwith to go to Damascus to investigate the affair, and report to his Government on it. Such a mission ought to be entrusted to an old experienced judge, of a cold, calm, and perfectly unbiassed disposition ; but M. de Meloize, whom I believe to be a very honourable man, is a young man of no more than 25 years old, an assistant in a consulate, and therefore already not qualified for so grave a purpose ; but more than this, I saw M. de Meloize before he received the above instructions. He was then exceedingly intemperate, and quite confident that Mr. de Ratti Menton, French Consul at Damascus, had acted with perfect propriety, and that the Jews are guilty of the charges laid against them. What is therefore now to be hoped for, from his mission ?

Had M. de Meloize authority, as well as instructions, not only to look over those journals which are impugned, but to re-examine witnesses also, &c. &c.—request certain suspected characters to be arrested, &c.—perhaps more might be expected, but as it is, all that you have to do now is, to protest against disposing of your national fate and the lives of so many of your co-religionists in so summary a manner.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

G. W. PIERITZ.

P. S. I have not yet heard whether or not the late instructions from France will obstruct the resolve of the Consuls-General.



## APPENDIX E.

*Translation of a Hebrew Letter written by Abulafia, father of the individual who is reported by Mr. Pieritz to have embraced Mahomedanism whilst under torture.*

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CONCERNING the calumnies at Damascus, a plot was hatched, and they agreed to send away a priest who belonged to the French quarter, in order to accuse us of having murdered him.

They alleged—1st, That the priest entered the Jews' Street the day he was missing (the street was a thoroughfare) and was not seen to leave it.

The Jews answered that he left the street certainly on the other side,—but this would not satisfy them.

The Jews assembled in synagogue, and decreed, under pain of excommunication, that any one who knew of or had seen the priest, should declare it.

A Jew who feared God, answered directly, that he was a dealer in tobacco, and lived in the suburbs of the city, one hour's distance from the Jews' quarter, and near to dusk he saw the priest and his servant leaving the city, passing near him towards the fields; and he said to the servant of the priest, "Come here, and buy some tobacco, as you usually do."

The servant answered, "I am busy now; another time I will."



This evidence reached the French Consul, who immediately caused this Jew to be scourged till he expired, (God will avenge him) so that he should not relate this, lest it should be proved that he (the priest) left the city that night.

He also got hold of a prisoner, a Turk, who was in prison for a sum of money due to the Pasha, and who, to get himself out of prison, offered to prove the Jews guilty, so that they would set him free.

This Turk had already tried to get the money of a Jew named David Arari, under threat that if he did not give it, he would accuse him of murder.

Arari thought that if he did give it, it would be a proof of guilt, and refused to give him any thing.

Then this Turk seized a Jewish barber, who had already been severely tortured, and said to him "They will torture you more and more ; why should you die?—Say David Arari invited you to his house to kill him (the priest), and then you will receive money and honours." And he, by these means and by threats, persuaded him till he was compelled to say that David Arari called him to his house, and he found there six others of the chief men of the city, and David said to him, "Come here and kill this priest," who was bound before him, and they paid him his reward.

Now one of the seven persons denounced by the barber as being of those present at the murder with Arari, was a good and upright man named Joseph Leniado : they seized and imprisoned him.

He answered, "On the very night the barber states that I was at David Arari's house, I have two Christian wit-



nesses that were with me the whole night, and I never left them. They were travellers lodging at my house, and left two days after for their own city.

But these wicked accusers would not wait till the witnesses arrived, although a courier was sent to fetch them, to have their evidence. But they smote and scourged him till he died under their hands. Oh, Lord, behold thy servant's blood poured out, and avenge it on them !

All this was done that the two witnesses might not appear, and falsify the barber's evidence.

This suborner above named, suborned and enticed with promises and threats the servant of David Arari to confirm the barber's statement; and they scourged and punished their victims with blows, and fire, and water.

They then began to search the houses, search after search, but they found nothing. Now the Jews were very fearful lest some bones should be brought and disposed in some Jewish premises, and as they suspected so it was—for the Jews told the watchman who watched in the Jews' quarter, that he should be vigilant to look to this, and he therefore looked well after all Christian passengers that went near the conduits. When the Christians saw that this watchman hindered them from their evil purpose, they imprisoned him, and smote him till he died under the rod. See, oh Lord, and behold thy servant's blood poured out !

That night they did this wickedness, they deposited bones in the conduits, (there being then no Jewish watchman) and on the morrow they went and searched this conduit and found the old bones, and caused a great cry, and most of the physicians agreed that they were the bones of



quadrupeds ; but one physician doubted, and said, " Perhaps they are human bones, but they are old." This is evident ; they could not accomplish their wicked purpose till they had murdered the watchman ; and it is fully believed by many persons that they got the priest to go away in order to accuse the Jews, and when the truth and a fair trial is had, all will be proved. I will no longer dwell on this matter, but will relate what has occurred since the order of the Pasha Mahommed Ali to the Pasha of Damascus, that he should no longer torture or question the Jews ; and this he has obeyed.

But as this Pasha of Damascus has been the individual through whose authority the evil of the Consul has been perpetrated, he endeavours to sustain the falsehood by artifice.

And as soon as the edict came from Egypt, the Christians all being incited by their leaders, rose against the Jews with reproaches, smiting both men and women with their fists. They blasphemed our holy law in the streets and market-places, took from our synagogues the Taleth\* and Tephilin, and put them on the dogs, and spoke against the holy Talmud.

Till at last the Consuls at Damascus wrote to the Pasha, " Why do these proceedings go on, and you be silent ?" He answered, " How can I oppose such a multitude of Christians ?—I have no power." When the Consuls wrote this answer to the Consul-General Neomsi at Alexandria, he made it known to Mahommed Ali, who decreed that no Christian should henceforth molest a Jew.

\* Sacred garments.



But the truth is, the Pasha here of Damascus, is an enemy of the Jews, otherwise he would not have answered thus when called on for protection ; for all the Christians are considered by him as dogs, but he sets them on, and they depend on him, and do as they think fit in this matter.

Such is their enmity, that one night they made a Christian strong man drink wine, and armed him and sent him to the Jews' quarter. He went into one court-yard quite furious, with a drawn sword in hand, and said, " I come to kill many Jews, who are all blasphemers and villains." The Jews cried bitterly for help. The guards who patrolled the city heard it, and the cry of murder ; they were going to seize him, but he said, (I saw this Christian assaulting you) it is not my fault, the French Consul, the associate of the Governor of the city, sent me."

They then sent him away free, and the intention of this troubler of Israel, this Consul Beandin, through whose means all this affair was brought about, is, that the Jews should kill this Christian, and be accused of another crime.

After this the Christians went to an old cemetery, which belonged to the Jews since A. M. 5408, and violated the graves and strewed about the bones, and took one of their corpses there and buried it. The Jews bitterly complained of this, but received no redress. They went away with anguish of soul.

But still the Pasha is inciting the accused to sign a confession, to what they had admitted under torture, for he tells them he is certain they killed the friar. But they all answer, " All that which we have spoken and confessed, was in consequence of the blows and tortures, and far be it



from us to commit murder." And they asked my son (who is considered as a Mahomedan, which God forbid!) "What do you say respecting this matter?—You have already admitted you killed him."

He answered and said, "*We* Jews neither have murdered nor do we murder any one, and blood is an abomination and horror to us, and all we have confessed was only to escape torture."

The Pasha answered, "Why do you include yourself among the Jews,—you belong to us."

My son answered, "I am a Jew, the son of a Jew, and all that I have said has been for fear and dread of the cruel treatments you inflicted on me, and I entreated of you to kill me, to be released from your hands; and through pain have the evil words come from my mouth."

And of the Haham, the chief Rabbi of the city, he requested him to sign the confession; saying, "You surely killed him?"

The Rabbi answered him, "When you smote me 500 stripes over all my body, I would not confess to a lie, and when you plunged me into a pool of cold water for three hours on the winter's day, and a drawn sword over my head that I dared not raise it—I lied not; and when you smote me 170 stripes on my hand, I still would not utter a falsehood; and when you drove the bones (which you placed round my head) into my eyes to blind me, I still lied not, and spake not this falsehood,—and now shall I sign to a lie?"

The Pasha then said, "At least sign to this, that by your law the property of the Gentiles is allowed to you."



The Rabbi answered, "It is false."

The Pasha answered, "In the Talmud (as I am informed) it is said from Habakkuk, 'He saw and spoiled the nations.'"

The Rabbi said, "This verse refers to the heathen idolaters, and the despoiling the Gentile is a heinous crime."

They then were taken back to prison, till the order of the Pasha arrives, as to where and before whom they are to be tried.

But those who are still alive are mutilated, as they suffered tortures of a horrible nature, and they were so injured, that they were all like the dead, from the excruciating anguish.\*

O thou jealous and avengeful God, pour out thy wrath on those evil doers.

Now we have heard that the Consul-General of France, in Alexandria, has sent his Vice-Consul to Damascus, at the request of his Government, to investigate this matter; but they have written from thence that this man is also an enemy of the Jews, and they fear there that he will incline to the evil practices of the French Consul, and to the leaders of the Christians in Damascus; and they write thence (Alexandria) that Mahommed Ali had already advised that all the confessions of the Jews, and that all that has been written against them till this day, are void, and investigation is to be renewed without any torture whatever.

\* The original text has here been departed from, since the details were unfit for publication.



And we also hear that the English Consul there has received an order from his Government that he should go himself to Damascus to try this matter ; and they wrote also that nearly all the Consuls are friends of the Jews, except the French, who is still an enemy : and the advice of many of the heads here is, that I should myself go to Paris, to demand that the case should be tried by them, and to demand reparation for the blood of the murdered men that have been tortured, for those that they have smitten, men and women, and for those that they have despoiled. But, truly I am feeble and aged, and I wish to know the issue of the proceedings of those persons who are to investigate, and then I shall know how to proceed. My heart bleeds for this trouble, and I am old ; and all the great of the city (Constantinople) leave their property and home for the deliverance of Israel. In the affair of Rhodes they do their best, with the help of God, and with the assistance of the powers of Israel, and the help of Messrs. Rothschilds, judgment has been pronounced, in truth, in the Turkish Courts here ; and it is proved that it is all false and a calumny. And now the Jews demand justice on their murderers and despoilers for those that died under torture, and for the women that they afflicted, and for 150,000 piastres damages they suffered in the affair ; and now they are trying to discover who is to remunerate them—whether the English Consul, who is stated to have been the chief instigator, or the Pasha of Rhodes, who decreed all the evil. At all events, we trust that both will be displaced, in order that the Jews shall



have peace, for they are all a holy congregation fearing God.

A letter has been received from the estimable assembly of London (God preserve it!) in answer to the appeal made by us, and they write us that they will, with all their might and main, assist their brethren; and they have applied to the government, and no doubt thereupon it proceeds that the English Consul goes to Damascus to try this matter, and through him the Consul of Rhodes will be displaced, so that the wicked may cease from troubling, and not afflict any more.

But I am now going to Alexandria to see the end of this affair, and to assist my son. Look down and behold if there are any wounds like our wounds, ye chief men among the mighty, in the help of God, and may the Lord fight for you, and return this trouble to our enemies; and may fear and dread pursue those who rise up against us.

(Signed)

H. M. ABULAFIA.

Constantinople, 17 Sivan (19th June) 5600.

To Mr. H. Lehren, Amsterdam.



## APPENDIX F.

*Copy of a letter from the Rev. Dr. Hirschel to Sir Moses Montefiore, previous to his departure for Egypt.*

---

MY MOST WORTHY FRIEND,

Before you proceed on your important and pious mission, I wish to address a few remarks to you, which the duties of my office dictate and existing circumstances render necessary.

As you well know the Jews are perfectly innocent of the foul and barbarous crime with which they are charged, you will readily stake your honour here, and your salvation hereafter, on the truth of the declaration that no religious rite requiring human blood does, or ever did, exist among Israelites. But from what has been lately published, I apprehend you will be told by our calumniators that such a rite may exist, and you not know it, because, as our accusers assert, "this mystery of blood is not known by all Jews, but only by the Rabbins;" that therefore your asseveration might be perfectly true, as far as your own personal knowledge goes, and yet be false, as to the crime of which our nation is accused.



To meet this objection I come forward. I am a Rabbi ; Providence has permitted me to be the spiritual guide of the great Jewish communities of Britain for nearly forty years, previous to which time I filled a similar office in Germany. My honoured father (of blessed memory) for many years presided over the Jewish congregations in London, Berlin, and other towns of note in Europe ; so did his father before him : and for more than ten generations my ancestors have with great renown held the highest clerical dignities amongst us. Their instruction has been transmitted from father to son, until it reached me ; so that if any man, from the office he holds, the instruction he has received, and the ancestry from which he descends, ought to be thoroughly acquainted with all our laws, precepts, customs, rites, and observances, I may, without the slightest tincture of vanity, and in accordance with strict truth, declare I am that man.

Moreover, I am far advanced in life. On this earth I individually have nothing to hope for, but must expect it cannot be very long ere I shall appear before the Supreme Judge of the universe, the Holy One of Israel, who on Mount Sinai proclaimed, "Thou shalt not kill," and "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

With a full sense of my responsibility, I voluntarily come forward, and, without any equivocation or mental reservation whatsoever, join in the awful oath of expurgation, which, nearly 200 years ago, in the name of the whole



Jewish nation, and on the subject of this very accusation, was taken by the pious and learned Rabbi, Manasseh Ben Israel, to whose efforts the Jews owe their re-admission into Great Britain, and which oath he has recorded in his defence of the Jews, called *Vindiciæ Judæorum*. With him, and using his words, I say, "As this matter on our part is purely negative, and therefore cannot be cleared by the evidence of witnesses, I am constrained to use another kind of proof which the Lord, blessed for ever, has prescribed (Exodus xxii. 11), and that is an oath. Wherefore I swear, without any deceit or fraud, by the Most High God, the Creator of heaven and earth, who promulgated his law to the people of Israel on Mount Sinai, that I never yet to this day saw any such custom, as the use of human blood in any religious rite, among the people of Israel, and that they do not hold any such thing by divine precept of the law, or any ordinance or institution of their wise men, and that they never committed or sought to commit any such wickedness (that I know, or have credibly heard of, or have read in any Jewish author). And if I lie in this matter, then let all the curses mentioned in Leviticus and Deuteronomy come upon me, let me never see the blessing and consolation of Zion, nor attain to the resurrection of the dead."

This my solemn oath, which the virtuous and highly gifted Mendelssohn declared he was ready to repeat after Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel with a clear conscience, I place in your hands. Although the high authorities I have quoted require no support from my attestation, and I



am convinced that in this enlightened country every such declaration is uncalled for and superfluous ; but even where you are going this asseveration ought to satisfy the friends of truth, and I firmly trust that it will do so.

My best wishes attend you, my worthy friend. Go forth and prosper, and may a just and merciful God grant you that success which the justice of our cause deserves, that our innocence may be made manifest to all the nations of earth.

Believe me yours ever faithfully,

SOLOMON HIRSCHL,

No. 5, Bury-court, City,

Chief Rabbi.

29th Sivan (30th June), 5600 A.M.

(L. S.)

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